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DECEMBER 2001
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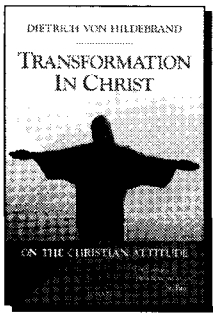

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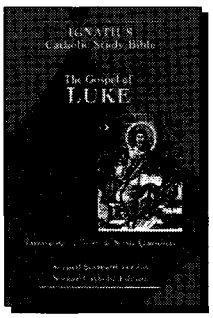

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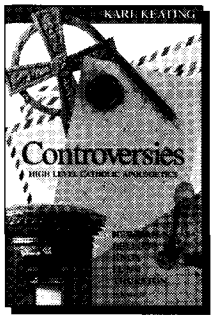

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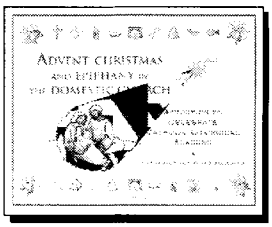

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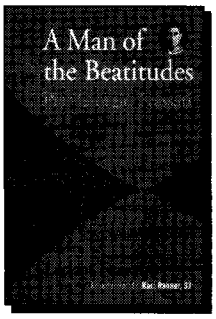

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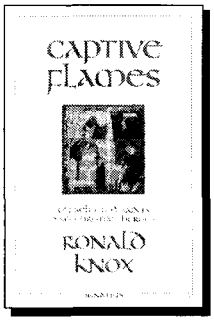

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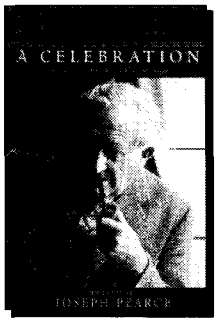

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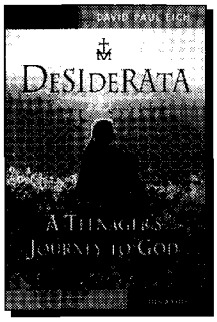

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Universalism Redux

In "Will All Be Saved?" (Public Square, August/September) Richard John Neuhaus uses an interesting argument to establish his hope of universal salvation: a) Christians are to pray for the salvation of everyone, b) one cannot pray for something that one certainly knows will not be granted, hence c) universal salvation is a legitimate hope.

But the basic issue here involves the different ways in which various petitionary prayers are offered up. For example, a Christian may pray that God would put an end to a drought and send rain. In doing so, he will be aware that should God answer his prayer, the answer will assume the form of a clear-cut, unilaterally performed act. But when a Christian prays for the salvation of human beings—either individually or en masse—does he do so in the same manner? I think not (unless the Christian is a Calvinist). Rather, he does so with the awareness that God's granting his request is—in some mysterious but real sense—dependent on the will of the individual(s) for whom he is praying.

Hence, a prayer such as "Lord, save everyone" is a perfectly legitimate cry of a Christian's heart, since it is rooted in his love for his fellow human beings. But in the final analysis it can only mean "Save all those whom it is possible to save," for the salvation of those who are finally impenitent is an intrinsic impossibility (just as it would be an intrinsic impossibility for God to send rain and withhold rain in the same place simultaneously). And Christ's parable of the sheep and the goats makes it clear that some people will indeed fall into that dark category.

John Harutunian
Newton, Massachusetts

Richard John Neuhaus' defense of the hope that all be saved requires him to explain away the Gospel texts (Matthew 7:13-14, 21-23; 8:12-13; 13:41-42; 22:13-14, 49-50; 25:31-46; Luke 13:23-28) in which Jesus says that few will be saved, describes the punishment of the reprobate, and indeed portrays himself as personally rejecting them. Father Neuhaus' argument is to read these reprobation texts as "suggesting a destiny of separation from God," while reading other texts (Colossians 1:19-20, 1 Corinthians 15:20-28, Romans 5:18, 11:33-36) as "suggesting the redemption of the entire cosmos," leaving us free to choose between these mutually exclusive alternatives, since the Church in her wisdom has not pronounced on the matter. But I'm afraid that the argument is not persuasive on a number of grounds.

Jesus does not "suggest" that some will not be saved; he comes right out and says it. Furthermore, the reprobation texts are not inconsistent with the cosmic redemption texts. In 1 Corinthians 15:20-28, the only such text involving sustained explanation, the leitmotif is the subjection of all to Christ and Christ to God, "that God may be all in all" (v. 28). God's being all in all is manifested precisely by the salvation of the righteous and the punishment of the reprobate. Christ "must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death" (v. 25-26). This language hardly suggests ultimate reconciliation with those enemies; indeed, it chiefly brings to mind Revelation 20, where Death, Hades, and those whose names are not written in the book of life are all thrown into the lake of fire. As for the other cosmic texts, their brief references to universal mercy and reconciliation are made in contexts that do not in-

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volve the issue of universal salvation, but do involve judgment and punishment (see Romans 2:5-10, 11:21-22; Colossians 2:6).

Finally, if the reprobation texts do not mean what they say, they are utterly incoherent. What sense does it make for Jesus to warn people that they may not make it through the narrow gate by telling them that most people will not make it—particularly if the truth is that in fact they may all make it?

Given the reprobation texts, I don't think that the hope that all be saved can avoid sliding into Origenism; and I am flabbergasted that Fr. Neuhaus does not recognize that Origenism, which entails a super-salvation not tied to doing God's will in this life, cannot be squared with the Church's ordinary and universal Magisterium.

John A. McFarland
Ellicott City, Maryland

I write to counter an impression left by Richard John Neuhaus' "Will All Be Saved?" That article, like Hans Urs von Balthasar's book on the same subject, tries to convince the reader that anyone who thinks some will not finally be saved cannot legitimately "hope for all." I think this is a mistake. I think that in an important sense one can both "hope for all" and yet hold to "the damnation of some" as a doctrine.

Permit me to preface my remarks by saying that I do not wish to take a position on the thorny doctrinal question whether we *know* that some (unknown) persons will be damned, although I take it for granted—as do von Balthasar and Neuhaus—that Catholic theology does not hold or teach that we *know* all will be saved, a proposition it is unlikely even the optimistic Origen affirmed with certainty, and is surely difficult to square with Jesus' repeated teaching on the "two ways" (e.g., Matthew 7:13-14), especially his answer to the question whether only a few would be saved. Catholic theologians normally have been shy about answering that question with any more certainty than Jesus himself projected when he responded indirectly but not reassuringly (Luke 3:23-29). On the other hand, the long list of distinguished twentieth-century Catholic theologians affirming the *hope* of universal salvation seems to have made it a fait accompli that Catholic theology permits one to hold that all *may* be saved. The real possibility of *apokatastasis* may even have been affirmed by the Holy Father.

Rather, I wish to question one line of argument in favor of universal salvation as a *hope*. This argument tries to establish that a genuine "hope for all" presupposes that universal salvation is a possibility. Since as Christians we are obliged by the gospel to hope for the salvation of every individual, we must suppose, this argument says, that the salvation of all people is at least possible. Since God would not expect us to hope for what could not someday really be the case, indirectly God has revealed that in the end all *may* be saved. Here I have rephrased Fr. Neuhaus' "thought experiment," an argument that echoes a similar line of reasoning found in von Balthasar's *Dare We Hope "That All Men Be Saved?"*

I think the above reasoning is flawed inasmuch as it entails an equivocation on the phrase "hope for all." We must distinguish between the salvation hope for each individual person who has lived, now lives, and will ever live and the hope that the entire collective of mankind will be saved. Are these two versions of "hope for all" the same? Not necessarily. This can be illustrated by another "thought experiment." Suppose I am told that one unknown person from a group of five will certainly die from cancer within the year. Suppose that all the persons are unknown to me so that I have no reason to wish that one person from the group will die rather than another. Out of human sympathy, I can and should hope that no single one of them will die from cancer. Nonetheless, I can be certain that one of them will die, so that the lives of all of them collectively will not be preserved. Therefore, I cannot legitimately hope that all five together will make it to the end of the year alive.

Precisely because the identities of the damned are unknown, it remains possible to "hope for all" (all the individuals) without necessarily having a "hope for all" (the collective). Even if it were revealed that some are damned, it would still be possible and requisite to hope for the salvation of all individuals. But it would not be possible to hope for the salvation of the complete collective if we knew that the possibility of such a future state of affairs was already nullified by, for example, someone exercising his freedom in such a way as to cancel out that possibility. Had that already occurred by the time of Christ, there would be no reason why this could not have been revealed to the apostles by Jesus as a caution against soteriological presumption. Moreover, if God in His foreknowledge saw that some would finally reject His love, there is no reason why that fact could not also be a revealed datum.

Those who think that some will be damned or are already in hell can still pray with the whole Church for the salvation of all. To demonstrate the Church's hope that all will be saved, Fr. Neuhaus quotes the Fatima prayer asking that Jesus "lead all souls to heaven." Yet the same messenger told the children that souls were going to hell because there was no one to offer prayers or make sacrifices for them. Those who received that message in faith saw no contradiction between Mary's prayer of "hope for all" and the knowledge that some will be lost. Nor do the arguments presented in Fr. Neuhaus' article prove we need to see any contradiction either.

Thomas Zebrowski
San Jose, California

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I don't know how anyone can hope that something will happen without at least believing that it *can* happen, no matter how small the probability of that may be. It seems to me that Scripture and tradition are pretty clear: not all will be saved. Therefore I can't hope that all are saved but I can hope that, one at a time, all will be saved. In other words, I can hope that I will be saved, and I can hope that you will be saved, and in that manner I can, by aggregation, extend the hope to every individual. I believe that this is in accordance with revelation.

Jim Roth
Ridgefield, Washington

I would like to add a postscript to Richard John Neuhaus' insightful Public Square piece, "Will All Be Saved?"

Karl Barth also gave impetus to *apokatastasis* as an article of hope, and not an article of faith, in *Church Dogmatics* IV/3/1, 477-478. Left unanswered is how this could come to be for those who have never heard the gospel. More than a few Catholic theologians speak about a "final fundamental option" on the boundary of death, rather than a purgatorial option, as the latter has to do only with those who die as "just souls" yet to be fully cleansed (see Edmund Fortman, *Everlasting Life After Death*).

Theology in the Reformation tradition has explored other alternatives, as in the "Andover theory" which views biblical texts such as 2 Peter 3:19-20 and 4:6 and Christ's descent to the dead referenced in the Apostles' Creed as warranting belief in the Hound of Heaven pursuing the last and the least. Neither the former fundamental option nor the latter divine perseverance beyond the gates of death constitutes universalism, as the possibility of a "No" from us is always there.

Gabriel Fackre
Abbot Professor of
Christian Theology, Emeritus
Andover Newton Theological School
Newton Centre, Massachusetts

RJN replies:
The foregoing letters are a sampling of the many responses received to my essay. We can go back and forth on all this until the cows come home. The question of whether we may hold to a hope (not a doctrine!) that all will be saved is both important and deeply intriguing. In speaking about the last things and the eschatological consummation of God's purposes, we must be very modest. Much of what we can say is highly speculative. Realities and relationships of space, time, infinity, eternity, and the promise that God and His Christ will be "all in all" (see, for instance, 1 Corinthians 15:28, Ephesians 1:23) surpass our experience and powers of conception. In the final consummation of God's saving plan, will evil find an everlasting holdout in the rejection of that plan by those who are everlastingly damned? Or is what seems to us to be a holdout of evil in fact the perfect justice of God, and therefore not evil but good?

Christians who desire to be orthodox rely upon the testimony of Scripture, and, when biblical texts are ambiguous or appear to be in conflict, upon the "rule of faith" as expressed in the Great Tradition of the worshiping community, the teaching of the Fathers, and conciliar definitions. At least for Catholics, that Great Tradition includes the authoritative teaching of the living Magisterium exercised by the bishops with and under the Bishop of Rome. On several occasions, and notably in a general audience of July 28, 1999, John Paul II has cautioned against excessive certitude in speaking about hell and damnation, while emphasizing that "eternal damnation remains a real possibility." It is Christ's victory over evil and the promise of eternal life with God, however, that is at the center of evangelization. "This prospect, rich in hope, prevails in Christian proclamation," he declared.

So where are we? There are biblical passages that seem to invite the hope that all will be saved. In addition to the above mentioned, we are told, for instance, that God desires the salvation of all, that Christ will draw all men to himself, and that grace is more abundant than sin, but these and other passages do not clearly affirm that all will be saved. We speak of the "deposit of faith" which is found in Scripture as authoritatively interpreted in the apostolic tradition under the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit. To the best of my understanding, the deposit of faith clearly affirms the following: that God desires the salvation of all and offers the real possibility of salvation to all; the offer can be accepted or rejected and, if accepted by faith, such faith is recognized as the gift of God; if the offer is knowingly, freely, and definitively rejected, even at the very last moment of life, one goes to hell, which is eternal; but the deposit of faith does not tell us clearly that anyone is in fact eternally damned.

That, I believe, is the teaching of the Church, and that is what I believe. Nothing in that teaching precludes, and much in that teaching seems to invite, the hope that everyone—past, present, and future—will be saved, even as we are painfully aware that that may not be the case, and even as we guard against the sin of presumption, which is to take for granted that it will be the case with us.

The discussion of whether all will be saved has been around for a long time. The current round of discussion, in these pages and elsewhere, was prompted by reflections in my book *Death on a Friday Afternoon.* My point was and is that our joy in the saving gospel and our mandate and desire to share that gospel with others are not contingent upon a certain knowledge that many or most or any are eternally damned. A more than sufficient reason for our joy and the desire to share that joy with others is the universal offer of life with God, now and forever, through the redeeming work of the crucified and risen Christ. As John Paul says, "This

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prospect, rich in hope, prevails in Christian proclamation." And with that we can perhaps give this discussion a rest, at least for a while.

Lights Out for Lutheranism?

It seems that James Nuechterlein asks us to love Lutheranism "just because" ("Turn Out the Lights?" August/September). It is a culture and a denomination in which many Christian hearts have made a home, many ethnicities have found a habit of being, discipleship has been sincerely lived, and deep affections for the gospel have been formed. Of that there is no doubt.

But Mr. Nuechterlein's writings of his church and his (female) pastor are rarely theo-logical and intellectually persuasive. His argument in past articles that it is a good thing that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America ordains women flies in the face of church unity, orthodoxy, and good theological thinking.

This current article is also an affront to the ELCA's stated ecumenical goals as well as Pope John Paul II's oft-repeated hope of a full visible (historical) church unity. I know that Mr. Nuechterlein speaks for most Lutherans when he says that he does not believe that it is possible this side of the Eschaton to expect church unity, but the weight of numbers does not make that position any less depressing. To say that "we continue to consider Lutheranism a confessional movement in the one comprehensive Church of Christ whose full lineaments will be made clear only in the End Time" is a neo-gnostic myth which refuses to believe that Jesus Christ founded a historical church that we are to take seriously.

Strictly speaking, it is unreasonable for an evangelical catholic of the Lutheran tradition not to aspire to full communion with the Roman Catholic Church in some form, this side of heaven. As the Pope demonstrated in *Fides et Ratio* in good Catholic tradition, faith and reason cannot function apart from one another in the mystery of redemption. It is understandably human to cling to the separate Lutheran reality, but ultimately it is not theologically tenable.

"Forever Lutheran" is an unholy posture. It is a deal struck in the face of an overwhelmingly complex and sinful situation, but it involves inconsistency and the abandonment of reason. It is a willingness to abandon all hope at the outset of the ecumenical project, an attitude that is not worthy of the pages of FIRST THINGS. For Christians, Rome is the ecumenical touchstone and centerpiece in this limited existence of ours, which is the only one we have.

It may be that Lutheran doctrinal reflections have run their course over the five-hundred-odd years of Reformation existence. The gift of the doctrinal insight from the Reformation has already been given and received. The remaining ecumenical contribution is what we ought to call "Lutheran culture," one filled with blessed pieties, a love of Jesus Christ and Sacred Scripture, a sense of being a company of saints that is often lost in Roman Catholic parishes, and other collateral graces stemming from the passions of the Reformation. These are true treasures of the Christian tradition, not to be lost.

But the abandonment of reason, a habitual Lutheran tendency in the face of overwhelming popular opinion through history (one need only think of Nazi Germany and the current collapse of Lutheran will in the face of the abortion and homosexuality conflicts), strikes a deal with the devil. While warmly recognizable in our daily lives, it is not the stuff of good theology or churchly reflections.

(The Rev.) Jeffrey C. Silleck
Reformation Lutheran Church
(ELCA)
Eastlake, Ohio

I would like to thank James Nuechterlein for his essay. His view of the ELCA mirrors my own experience and disillusionment. Synod assemblies and gatherings of pastors do little more than put a serious kink in my soul. I stopped attending my local text-study group because I got tired of being the dissenting voice to the liberal viewpoints of my colleagues.

I'm not as optimistic as Mr. Nuechterlein about the local parish. Most of the pastors with whom I have any contact see abortion as okay, homosexuality as just another lifestyle choice, and so on. I plan to retire soon and the question that weighs on my mind is, Where do I go for spiritual and liturgical sustenance in the wasteland of the ELCA?

(The Rev.) Terry D. Hudson
St. John Lutheran Church
Sioux City, Iowa

James Nuechterlein replies:
Pastor Silleck thinks I have done some quite terrible things—abandon reason, adopt an "unholy posture," embrace a "neo-gnostic myth," and "strike a deal with the devil"—because I believe it highly unlikely, in any foreseeable future, that Lutherans and Catholics will achieve ecclesiastical unity. I'll try to avoid reciprocal sneers (although his reference to Nazi Germany makes the temptation all but irresistible), but I do want, very briefly, to unmuddy what he has made of my position.

I pray for unity among all Christians, Lutherans and Catholics included. I pray further that God will achieve Lutheran/Catholic unity—and do so in history, short of the Eschaton. But, as Pr. Silleck puts it, I do not "expect" such unity. Pr. Silleck finds that position "depressing." So do I, but that's not the point. The point is whether, given the reality of the differences between the two churches, it is reasonable to expect ecclesial reunion. I have given my reasons, which I will not repeat here, for answering that question in the negative. I have not, contrary to Pr. Silleck, abandoned reason. He simply does not like the conclusions my reason has led me to.

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My estimation of the situation is hardly peculiar to me. Why have prominent Lutherans such as Richard John Neuhaus and Robert Louis Wilken made the decision to go to Rome? Precisely because, among other reasons, they concluded that that which they had hoped and struggled for all their lives—repairing the breach of the sixteenth century—was simply not in the cards. Having reached that conclusion, they had to make a decision. I reached the same conclusion, but made a different decision.

Pr. Silleck apparently believes—though his letter seems not entirely clear on the point—that Lutherans of an evangelical catholic persuasion have no such necessary decision to make. I think, with all due respect, that he is deceiving himself, and that he will in time be forced to make the painfully difficult decision he appears to want to avoid. In the meantime, I would urge on him a more charitable, or at least less insulting, attitude toward those of us who find ourselves resigned to exercising our evangelical catholicity within the Lutheran communion.

Finally, I thank Pr. Hudson for his sympathetic comments, and I pray that he finds a parish community that reflects the best of a great Lutheran Christian tradition.

Should Parents Be in Charge?

Hurrah for Theodore Forstmann's impassioned and tightly reasoned plea for placing parents in charge of education and for allowing the principles of democratic capitalism to guide this vital sector of our society ("Putting Parents in Charge," August/September).

Mr. Forstmann brilliantly demolishes the premises of the state monopoly that presently controls primary and secondary schooling in America, except for the wealthy and fortunate who use their clout to escape from its clutches or bend its rules on behalf of their children. He shows how that monopoly has failed in practice as well as theory. He outlines a profoundly superior alternative. And he knows what he's talking about; he has put his own energies and resources where his principles are. The Children's Scholarship Fund that he cofounded (with John Walton) is the sun around which most privately funded school-choice efforts now revolve. It has illuminated the demand for education alternatives in America and has made those dreams come true for tens of thousands of youngsters.

But I must add two additional perspectives to Mr. Forstmann's analysis. In my view, he underestimates the degree to which Americans cherish the concept of "public education" even as they chafe under its present reality. This ambivalence is carefully examined in Terry Moe's fine new book *Schools, Vouchers, and the American Public* (Brookings, 2001). Moe's data are sobering for the school-choice advocate, and they help to explain why so many efforts have foundered that sought to create the sort of regimen that Mr. Forstmann (and I) favor.

Second, one must ask what besides freedom may be needed for an education marketplace to succeed. Most successful markets follow certain ground rules, such as the clarity and comparability of information about suppliers, so that consumers can make informed decisions. In my view, the education market will work well only if the public has a wealth of accurate, comparable information about every school (or other education provider). In this domain, customer satisfaction is a necessary but insufficient criterion for a successful market. Society's interests require that we also look for improved academic achievement. To get there through the marketplace, we need agreed-upon academic standards and tests that every school participates in. Hence I join the Bush Administration in favoring state-level standards and mandatory testing. But I join Mr. Forstmann in believing that the "accountability" mechanism that should be attached to those standards and test results is a parent-driven marketplace rather than state-imposed rewards and sanctions.

Chester E. Finn, Jr.
John M. Olin Fellow
Manhattan Institute
New York, New York

Theodore Forstmann's essay on education addresses an area of education that is often ignored—parental involvement. Unfortunately, Mr. Forstmann is guilty both of going to the opposite extreme and of misdiagnosis.

Parental choice in education is indeed important, but not to the point of ignoring common standards all should follow. While basic literacy was higher before the days of Horace Mann, it was so because all had a basic understanding and agreement with respect to standards and common values, two things lacking in our society today. Those two things must exist before any meaningful reform in education can take place.

As a teacher, I am well acquainted with modern parents, most of whom have little involvement in the life of their children. On the one extreme there are poor single parents who work too much to have time for their children, and on the other the affluent parents who are too self-absorbed to take an interest in the life they brought into the world.

Can the parents who allow their children to watch unlimited hours of unsupervised television, who drop their children off at the mall for an entire day without direction, who allow their children unlimited rein on the Internet really have an interest in them? They have already made their choice for the life of their children, and unfortunately they are the majority of parents in our society. Ask any teacher what percentage of parents take an active role in their child's education, take responsibility for their

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child's work and behavior, attend parent/teacher conferences and open house, or are simply able to be contacted at all about their child. You'll find that in almost every case the percentages are woefully low.

As a teacher I would love for every parent to be what Mr. Forstmann thinks they all are. It would make teaching much easier. Unfortunately, almost all the social problems we face are fundamentally caused by the breakdown in the family. What affects the household ultimately affects the city—any Greek tragedy will tell us as much. Once family life becomes stabilized, then education and many other problems in society will be remedied as well.

Jude A. Huntz
Prince of Peace Catholic School
Dallas, Texas

"Putting Parents in Charge" is one of those feel-good statements that a writer knows one cannot refute without sounding like an unreasonable extremist. However, in Theodore Forstmann's article it seems that several important issues are glossed over, specifically when it comes to the historical and economic arguments.

Where to begin? How about the statement, "For the first 230 years of our history, parents, not government, were in charge. Competition kept quality high and costs low. Competence in reading, writing, and arithmetic was nearly universal at the time of the American Revolution." It's difficult to dispute the first statement, but the second sentence is laughable. The costs were low because almost universally parents—usually the mother—taught children at home. High quality? Well, that was restricted to how well the mother could teach, but it was not likely for her to get beyond the 3R's, as that was all that was required of a literate person of the time. Children were educated to be able to read the Bible, as well as keep household accounts. None were expected to learn algebra or geometry—addition, subtraction, division, and multiplication sufficed in math. Children were expected to write letters to family and friends once they got older, not essays on the soliloquies of Hamlet.

In the cases where there was a school as an alternative to a mother's lessons, the teacher—who was boarded around the neighborhood given a salary that would not sustain him or her otherwise—taught lessons not much more advanced than what was previously learned at mother's knee. Of course, homeschooling, the ultimate in putting parents in charge of their children's education and the historical model which worked for 230 years, is legal and practiced in all fifty states. You wouldn't know that from Mr. Forstmann's essay.

What Mr. Forstmann seems to ignore is that there is more educational choice available now to parents than ever before. There are the traditional public schools, magnet public schools, the new movement of charter schools, religious schools, and secular private schools. One can buy lectures from the Teaching Company about anatomy, Chaucer, math, and the history of the English language (at a very reasonable price, I might add). There are also websites like "How Stuff Works" (www.howstuffworks.com), which explains topics from how MP3 players work to how kidneys work. With libraries across the nation having public Internet access, this kind of free education is available to almost everyone. I am supposed to think that parental choice in education is lacking?

Of course, all this talk of "parental choice" is really another term for "vouchers." A noncontroversial way to put this would be to explain what is intended with vouchers—to have government provide the money for education, however people want to spend it for their children's education. I'm sure there is a case to be made for this type of voucher, but trying to make historical claims and claims to limitation of educational choice is disingenuous. If we went back to the "old" model in which parents were in charge and government had no control over education, we would be in the old situation in which parents had to pay for any education outside the home. Another part of the old model is private benefactors who set up schools in their towns, and there are currently private organizations that raise money to pay for private school and college for deserving students.

It's obvious that Mr. Forstmann is not advocating getting rid of the "government funding" side of education, simply the "government running" side. As it is, parents have plenty of choice over their children's education, but now instead of one free choice, homeschooling, they have a plethora of free choices.

Mary Pat Campbell
New York, New York

Theodore Forstmann is right that additional school days, longer school hours, smaller classes, and higher teacher salaries are not answers to the crisis in education. Schools with the best facilities and the highest-paid teachers often fail because they are ultimately accountable to bureaucrats for regulatory compliance, instead of to parents for results.

Jersey City, New Jersey, where I live, has some of the highest paid teachers in the nation. Yet more than half of the students entering its public high schools drop out, and fewer than half of those students who remain are able to pass a state-required test for graduation.

Low-income families in places like Jersey City know very well that their children realize their best chance for success in schools that are directly accountable to parents. That is why in Jersey City, where 42 percent of all school families receive public assistance, one quarter of the city's children attend privately managed schools.

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The teachers' union also knows that many more parents would like to choose privately managed schools. In 1995 when PepsiCo offered to assist our nonprofit scholarship foundation with private charitable contributions, the Jersey City Education Association threatened a state and national boycott of all Pepsi products. The unions are willing to hold poor families hostage to a failed system even while a majority of Jersey City teachers and their union president send their own children to private schools.

Daniel J. Cassidy
Children's Scholarship Fund
New York, New York

Kerrey Under Fire

I am quite surprised at Andrew J. Bacevich's naive and facile condemnation of Senator Robert Kerrey ("The Vietnam Wars," August/September). He obviously never read Chairman Mao's work on guerrilla warfare. He also must not have talked to Vietnam vets or he would have known that women guerrillas dressed like peasants would send their little children out to the GIs to get candy—with grenades strapped to their bodies. The professor did not note that the woman describing the "massacre" in question said that she was Viet Cong in the war.

Somalia should have reminded the good academic that guerrillas often use civilians as screens when attacking regular troops. Guerrillas want GIs to fire on civilians to make them seem the enemy of all civilians. This is easy to achieve in the ambiguity of a night attack. This is basic guerrilla war strategy against a militarily and technologically superior foe. Men in severe combat often have great difficulty in recalling and talking about their experiences. It makes them easy to exploit.

Howell A. McConnell
Retired Department of
Defense Analyst
Riverdale, Maryland

Andrew J. Bacevich says that "Kerrey the good soldier and Calley the war criminal did not differ as much as previously advertised" and that "Kerrey himself was complicit in blurring the distinction . . . characterizing his involvement as an 'atrocity' for which he felt guilt and shame."

Senator Kerrey, as an officer, was responsible for the moral behavior of his men and for the lives in his command. When fired upon, he could have assumed the village was defended. If wrong, he would be responsible for killing innocent civilians. He could have assumed that the village was not defended, and if wrong he would have been responsible for the deaths of men in his command. The awful moral choice forced on Senator Kerrey is a commonplace aspect of war, not understood at all by professors and editorial writers who imagine, with obscene hubris, that they could avoid the guilt feelings associated with combat. Does Senator Kerrey feel guilty? Of course. He has lived with his guilt for thirty years, without complaint, a vivid contrast to the moral posturing and outrageous hubris of some commentators.

Hal J. Breen, M.D.
Combat Veteran, 18th Cavalry
Recon Squadron
Phoenix, Arizona

Andrew J. Bacevich replies:
Ad hominem attacks do not merit a response, but Mr. McConnell can rest assured that I have spoken to Vietnam vets—indeed, I am one. As to the "obscene hubris" of professors who imagine that they can avoid feelings of guilt, I am not sure who Dr. Breen is referring to.

For the Record

I would like to set the record straight on a statement made by Richard Doerflinger in his review of Wesley J. Smith's book *Culture of Death* (August/September). Mr. Doerflinger, summarizing Smith, writes that "modern secular bioethics often sets itself against religion, and [Smith] even quotes ethicist Daniel Callahan as saying that the 'first thing' bioethics had to do to establish itself was 'to push religion aside.'"

I did indeed write that, but I was simply describing what seemed to me to have gone on in the early days of bioethics, not endorsing that development. On the contrary, I found that a deplorable trend, a mixture of an academic turf struggle on the part of philosophers who wanted to play a dominant role in the new field and not a little hostility to religion on the part of many of them. As I wrote in the Fall 1999 issue of *Daedalus*, "The decline of religious contributions [to bioethics is] a misfortune, leading to a paucity of concepts, a

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thin imagination, and the ignorance of traditions, practices, and forms of moral analysis of great value." I made similar points in an article "Religion and the Secularization of Bioethics" in a special supplement to the *Hastings Center Report* (July/August 1990), which was an offshoot of a project at the Center on religion and bioethics. And I made a particular effort to get Gilbert Meilaender, a frequent contributor to FIRST THINGS, elected a Fellow of the Center some years ago.

Daniel Callahan
Hastings Center
Garrison, New York

Tolerance for Tertullian

Must we keep dragging out Tertullian's *Quid Athenae Hierosolymis?*—"What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?"—as the quintessence of narrowness and intellectual intolerance (A. J. Conyers, "Rescuing Tolerance," August/September)? We fail thereby to do justice to a trenchant question and to an able and engaging thinker who apparently had done a fair bit of listening to the philosophers.

Tertullian was quite typical in thinking that the philosophers borrowed from Moses but mixed truth with error. His main objection was to the "mottled Christianity of Stoic, Platonic, and dialectic composition" that served as cover for the deceits of the heretics. Nor should we forget that this element of *De Præscriptione* has roots in *Apologeticus*, which is precisely an argument for religious toleration.

A more "tolerant" attitude towards Tertullian, in Conyers' own sense of the word, might have afforded him a further opportunity for redeeming this notion from the Lockeans and other relativists.

Douglas Farrow
Associate Professor of
Christian Thought
McGill University
Montreal, Quebec

A. J. Conyers replies:
I think Professor Farrow has helped my larger argument by calling attention to the complexity of Tertullian's thought. It was not my intention to suggest that Tertullian's oft-repeated question discredited, or even fully captured, his argument. Nor was it my intention to analyze his thought, although, as Prof. Farrow suggests, there are some lessons to be learned there that would do much good in understanding the philosophical openness of first millennium Christianity. I was merely attempting to acknowledge that every utterance and every act of the early Church is not consistent with what I will insist was a widespread spirit of openness toward alien thinkers. Although Tertullian's full argument suggests to some degree what I am trying to demonstrate, in terms of the range of thought one finds in the Church in its first millennium, other Christian writers illustrate better the kind of openness I was suggesting. There are, after all, reasons that Tertullian, and not Clement or Justin Martyr, was more subject to the temptations of Montanism, and I would not hesitate to say that it had something to do with a disposition toward rejecting thought tinged with pagan roots. To suggest, after all, that philosophers could speak the truth insofar as they "borrowed from Moses" is hardly the high-water mark of Christian tolerance in any century.

Disagreeable Disagreements

What a difference a page makes! On page 80 of the August/September 2001 issue, Richard John Neuhaus editorializes about "How to Disagree" by quoting the rule of Richard Baxter (which Father Neuhaus points out was reiterated by John XXIII): "In necessary things unity; in doubtful things liberty; in all things charity." Yet on the very next page ("We Piped and You Did Not Dance"), he exhibits none of these qualities.

When, in his visit to Syria, Pope John Paul II did not respond when President Hafaz Assad referred to Jews in crudely anti-Semitic terms, many throughout the world were disappointed. Abraham Foxman and the Anti-Defamation League referred to the Pope's behavior as "the sin of silence." For Fr. Neuhaus, such an accusation "is of course intended to evoke the old canard about Pius XII's alleged silence during the Holocaust." Canard? Why the use of such a harsh term when there are still so many questions left unanswered regarding Pius' actions during the war years, and more than a half century later the Vatican recently announced that it could still not open its archives on Nazi-Papal relations for "technical" reasons. Canard? What happened to Richard Baxter's "unity, liberty, and charity"?

Fr. Neuhaus' comment continues by criticizing Mr. Foxman for his "rudeness" and "misbehavior," with the ADL acting like "petulant children in the marketplace throwing a tantrum," and reminding Foxman and the ADL that the Pope is not "anybody's lackey." This is "How to Disagree"? Try concluding, as Fr. Neuhaus did, that a change in the ADL's approach is necessary, even if it "may put a crimp in ADL's fundraising." Talk about a "canard"! What was that remark "intended to evoke"? What happened to "In necessary things unity; in doubtful things liberty; in all things charity"?

Rabbi Mitchell Wohlberg
Congregation Beth Tfiloh
Baltimore, Maryland

RJN replies:
Truth is a necessary thing. It is, in my judgment, true to say that talk about the "silence" of Pius XII is a canard. (See Robert Rychlak, *Hitler, the War, and the Pope*, reviewed in FT by John Jay Hughes, October 2000.) The truth is that the Jewish-Catholic committee assigned to study the documents pertinent to the Holy See and the Holocaust was recently

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suspended not for "technical" reasons but, according to public statements by Walter Cardinal Kasper and William Cardinal Keeler, because of the noncooperation and bad faith of two Jewish members of the group. The factor of ADL fundraising was raised by Rabbi Daniel Lapin, whom I quoted. In view of ADL's long-established pattern of advertising and fundraising, I do not think it doubtful that that was a factor in Mr. Foxman's statements, nor was it a violation of charity to mention it.

Vigil

The neighborhood changed
the day the dead moved in.
The rich barred their gates,
the reputable fled.

Those of us who stayed
sat at our windows
watching the vans creep up,
trying to peer into their faces.
It was beastly quiet.

One by one, a few of us
went over
to see if there was anything
we could do.

But there was nothing
we could do.

Sara Miller

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FIRST THINGS

DECEMBER 2001

In a Time of War

The Editors

This is war. Call it a sustained battle or campaign, if you will, but the relevant moral term is war. It is not, as some claim, a metaphorical war. Metaphorical airplanes flown by metaphorical hijackers did not crash into metaphorical buildings leaving thousands of metaphorical corpses. This is not virtual reality; this is reality. This is, for America and those who are on our side, a defensive war. The aggressor leaves no doubt that this is war. Osama bin Laden and his like do not head a sovereign state but they speak for many of our declared enemies. "We are steadfast on the path of jihad," bin Laden declares. Of the terrorists he says, "We hope that they are the first martyrs in Islam's battle in this era against the new crusade and Jewish campaign led by the big crusader Bush under the flag of the cross." Bin Laden and his counterparts lead a shadow state or, more precisely, a parasite state that lives off the states that provide them refuge and aid. As we have now learned to our remorse, the terrorist parasite state also lives off the freedom and hospitality of the nations it attacks, including the United States of America.

Steadfast clarity about this historical moment and the obligations attending requires our recalling President Bush's address to Congress of September 20. "On September 11," he said, "enemies of freedom committed an act of war against our country." It is claimed by some that terrorist attacks are not acts of war but crimes to be punished by international tribunals. To which President Bush answers, "Whether we bring our enemies to justice or bring justice to our enemies, justice will be done." The inescapable fact is that they are *our* enemies, and the rule of justice is that it is the first duty of the State to protect its citizens. There are no credible instruments of international force that can fulfill that duty or see that justice is done. The United States must lead, in the hope that those who understand that an attack on us is an attack on them will follow. "Every nation in every region now has a decision to make," said President Bush. "Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime."

In response to aggression, America does not appeal to the so-called court of international opinion. Rather, by its response, and invitation to others to join in that response, it intends to create a court of international opinion—and a coalition for international action. More than two centuries ago, in another time of testing, Americans declared that "a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them [to action]." We have again declared the causes, and the response to this declaration is revealing who does and who does not have not only a decent respect for the opinions of mankind but a decent respect for mankind. Determined hostility to a parasite state bent upon the mass murder of innocents is a minimal definition of decency.

"Our enemy," said President Bush, "is a radical network of terrorists and every government that supports them." Congress, with but one dissenting vote, has given him authority to prosecute this war to its end, which almost certainly will not be soon. "It will not end," the President declared, "until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped, and defeated." That is the declared aim of the war. Then these bold words: "We will rally the world to this cause by our efforts, by our courage. We will not tire, we will not falter, and we will not fail." In the coda of that historic speech, boldness is touched by humility: "The course of this conflict is not known, yet its outcome is certain.

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Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always been at war. And we know that God is not neutral between them. We will meet violence with patient justice, assured of the rightness of our cause and confident of the victories to come. In all that lies before us, may God grant us wisdom and may He watch over the United States of America."

A Nation Under God

In such words some claim to detect not humility but hubris, an uncritical identification of our purposes with the purposes of God. Let them make the case that between freedom and fear, between justice and cruelty, God *is* neutral. Let them make the case that those who have declared war against us do *not* intend to instill fear by inflicting cruelty. Assured as we are and must be of the rightness of our cause, the President submits that cause in prayer to a higher authority. In a time of grave testing, America has once again given public expression to the belief that we are "one nation under God"—meaning that we are under both His protection and His judgment. That is not national hubris. Confidence that we are under His protection is faith; awareness that we are under His judgment is humility. This relationship with God is not established by virtue of our being Americans, but by the fact that He is the Father of the common humanity of which we are part. Most Americans are Christians who understand the mercy and justice of God as revealed in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Recognizing the danger that the motto "For God and country" can express an idolatrous identity of allegiances, most Americans act in the hope that it represents a convergence of duties. All Americans, whatever their ultimate beliefs, have reason to hope that reality is not neutral in this war against the evil of terrorism.

We have witnessed a remarkable upsurge of a patriotism that some thought was lost beyond recovery. Many thought its loss a very good thing. If patriotism can be the last refuge of a scoundrel, and it can be, contempt for patriotism can be the refuge of gnostics who, in their presumed superiority to the particulars of time and place and people, would evade their duty. Planted in the beginnings of Christianity is a distinction that its adherents will probably never get just exactly right: "Render to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's." It is agreed by all that the emphasis falls on the second injunction—do not render to Caesar what is God's. Whether with respect to patriotism, wealth, family, or anything else, it is always a matter of the right ordering of our loves and loyalties. The meaning of that is set forth by the anonymous author of *The Letter to Diognetus*, written in the second century to explain to a pagan reader the way it is with these odd people called Christians:

> Christians are not distinguished from the rest of humanity by either country, speech, or customs. They do not live in cities of their own; they use no peculiar language, they do not follow an eccentric manner of life. They reside in their own countries, but only as alien citizens; they take part in everything as citizens, and endure everything as foreigners. Every foreign country is their homeland, and every homeland a foreign country. They obey the established laws, but in their own lives they go beyond the law. In a word: what the soul is in the body, that Christians are in the world. The soul dwells in the body, but does not belong to the body; just so Christians live in the world, but are not of the world.

Over the centuries, these "alien citizens," still far from their true home in the New Jerusalem that is history's promised consummation, have followed the course of Christian fidelity in accepting responsibility for the well-being of what is their home in time before the End Time. One product of that fidelity is the doctrine of just war associated with St. Augustine in the fourth and fifth centuries and further developed in what is aptly called the Great Tradition of Christian thought to the present day. In this teaching, just war, although occasioned by evil, is not itself an evil; nor is it even, as is commonly said today, a necessary evil. It is, if just, a positive duty, the doing of which, while it may entail much suffering, is to be counted as a good.

A War That Is Just

In this Christian teaching, the criteria of just war are divided into two categories—*ius ad bellum* and *ius in bello*. The first have to do with the reasons that justify going to war, the second with how a just war is to be conducted. According to the first set of criteria, a just war is *defensive*, aimed at protecting the innocent against unjust aggression. It must be undertaken with the *right intention* of establishing a just peace, and a reasonable expectation that the means employed will be *proportionate* to the ends sought. A just war is a *last resort*, undertaken when it is reasonably determined that there are not alternative ways to resolve the conflict, and when there is a reasonable *probability of success* in achieving the aims of the war. Such, all too briefly, are the criteria pertinent to the decision to go to war—*ius ad bellum*. By these criteria, the decision of the United States to wage war against terrorism is amply justified.

The second set of criteria, *ius in bello*, is quite distinct, and must be kept so. Distinctions can be multiplied, but the *ius in bello* criteria are essentially two: *proportionality* and *discrimination*. The first requires the use of no more

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force than is necessary to vindicate the just cause. The second pertains to what is called "noncombatant immunity," meaning that there must be no intentional killing of innocent civilians. Put differently, *ius ad bellum* deals with the "cause" of war and *ius in bello* with the "conduct" of war. The present war is just in its cause and, we may reasonably hope, will be just in its conduct. A war against the parasite state of terrorism will, we are told, be conducted in an often furtive and secretive manner. It seems likely that unjust acts will be committed, also by our side, and when they are known they must be condemned. Known or unknown, they are wrong.

The duty to engage in just war is undertaken in the awareness that its conduct and costs cannot always be anticipated or controlled. The decisions pertinent to *ius ad bellum* are reasoned and principled. The decisions pertinent to *ius in bello,* while they are to be held accountable to reason and principle, are contingent and sometimes improvised under severe pressures. Those who do their duty in waging war to protect the innocent should have no illusions. Even the most just war entails great horror. The words of General Sherman must be kept ever in mind: "It is only those who have neither fired a shot nor heard the shrieks and groans of the wounded who cry aloud for blood, more vengeance, more desolation. War is hell." Just war teaching never countenances the cry for blood, vengeance, and desolation. That is the cry of our enemies who have forced this war upon us. Blood, vengeance, and desolation is their aim, as is now evident to all but the willfully blind. They are our enemies. They have repeatedly declared so in venomous words and murderous deeds. We must pray that one day they will not be our enemy. At present, and perhaps for a long time into the future, it is our moral duty to see to it that they are "found, stopped, and defeated." If we allow ourselves to be paralyzed by the uncertainties entailed in the conduct and outcome of war, we surrender to the certain triumph of great injustice.

Coalitions and Moral Legitimacy

Toward that end, America must unapologetically take the lead. In recent years, the idea has spread that unilateral action is not morally legitimate. That idea is not grounded in sound moral reasoning. Sometimes the choice is between unilateral action or no action at all. In every dimension of prosecuting this war—diplomatic, policing, intelligence, financial, and military—the U.S. will of course welcome the cooperation of others, but there is no moral requirement for necessary action to be held hostage to the veto power of a coalition in which the most timorous member calls the plays. From the beginning, Britain once again vindicated its claim to a "special relationship" with the United States. While the cooperation of Europe must be cultivated, it may be less certain in the long term. If the current fertility level continues, Europe's population of 727 million will plummet to 556 million by the year 2050, requiring more than three million immigrants per year for the next fifty years if Europe is to remain economically viable. Such immigration will be, for the most part, from Islamic countries, thus profoundly transforming a continent that has been almost entirely Christian. In building international cooperation, the U.S. may also have to make temporary alliances of convenience with repugnant tyrannies such as Sudan and Syria. The hard-won American resolution to oppose the domestic terror of such countries in violating human rights, especially religious freedom, must not be permanently sacrificed for their temporary cooperation in the war against international terrorism.

The statement of a war aim signifies not only a purpose but also a terminal point. When will we know that it is over? President Bush has declared, "It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped, and defeated." After September 11, we are or should be in a permanent state of heightened vigilance, but we must not resign ourselves to being in a permanent state of war. Not immediately, but in due course, we need a clear statement on how we will know that the war is over and a just peace is reasonably secured. There may never be, and there should never be, a return to the last decade's delusory holiday from the vicissitudes of history, but it seems probable that a democracy cannot survive and flourish in a permanent state of emergency.

Because we are a democracy, we will tolerate a large measure of dissent from our national purpose in this war—some of it honorable, much of it contemptible. Our morally debilitated professoriat in particular often seems to be a breed apart, going on endlessly about how violence breeds violence and how we must address the root causes of resentment, etc., etc. They are inveterate complexifiers, offering detailed analyses of the seven sides of four-sided questions while declaring their achingly superior sensitivities that make them too sensitive for decent company. They test the patience of ordinary Americans who view reality from the moral pinnacle of common sense, but so far Americans have passed the test and they will likely continue to do so.

Pacifisms

Then there are the pacifists, real and fraudulent. The refusal to resist aggression, and thus the refusal to participate in war, has a long and venerable history in the Christian tradition. That refusal, along with the discipline of celibacy and poverty, is institutionalized in monasticism. Among the other services rendered by

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monastics, their pattern of radical discipleship is a powerful reminder of the call to be "in but not of the world." Such communities of heroic virtue are proleptic outposts of the Peaceable Kingdom that is not yet. Among Protestants, too, there are, for instance, the Mennonites, followers of the sixteenth-century Menno Simons, who are pledged to nonresistance as an article of faith. Our laws make provision also for those individuals who, for reasons they find compelling, decide that they cannot in good conscience participate in war. We rightly respect their decision, even as we may be unpersuaded by their reasons.

Fraudulent pacifism, which is now making a noisy reappearance, is something else. Proponents of "nonviolent resistance" are not pacifists. Pacifists embrace not nonviolent resistance but nonresistance. Nonviolent resistance to the aggression we face is simply a proposed tactic that most sensible people find implausible. The proposal that aggression should be resisted by hugging a terrorist is not idealistic; it is simply dumb. The "pacifist" proponents of nonviolent resistance do not, as many seem to think, occupy the moral high ground while the rest of us are prepared to get our hands dirty in "the real world." They live in an unreal world of utopian fantasy that has no basis in Christian faith. Yes, they may be intensely sincere, and that can be touching, but they are also monumentally wrong. The difference is not between idealism and realism, nor between moral purity and moral compromise. The difference is a disagreement in discerning one's duty in the face of a challenge not of one's choosing. In a time of patriotic fervor, it may take a measure of courage to be in a minority advocating nonviolent resistance, but the advocates of that course are also comfortably refusing the call to service with its risk of killing or of being killed.

Some ask, What would Jesus do? Can you imagine, it is asked, Jesus flying a stealth bomber or joining in a commando raid? One might as well ask if you can imagine Jesus driving a bus, editing a magazine, or being a tenured professor in a religious studies department. The question is not what Jesus would do but what he would have us do. Real pacifists answer that question one way. Other faithful disciples answer that, in obedience to the command to love the neighbor, it is their duty to defend the innocent by engaging in a just war against a murderous aggressor. One matter that has been morally muddied in recent decades should now be clarified: those who in principle oppose the use of military force have no legitimate part in the discussion about how military force should be used. They only make themselves and their cause appear frivolous by claiming that military force is immoral and futile, and, at the same time, wanting to have a political say in how such force is to be employed. The morally serious choice is between pacifism and just war. Here, too, sides must be taken.

Tocqueville's America

In the aftermath of September 11, we have witnessed an astonishing surge of neighborly caring and national solidarity, along with a buoyant patriotism unprecedented in living memory. The yellow ribbons of the Iran hostage crisis of more than twenty years ago—too often a symbol of self-pity and maudlin sentimentality—were suddenly displaced by the flag. Nobody decreed that it should be so; it just happened, and its happening is likely of great significance. The surge of patriotism has sometimes spilled over into jingoism, which is not surprising in view of the brutality of the assault upon the security of what now, quite suddenly, people are calling our "homeland." As with all passions, patriotism is subject to excesses and does not lend itself to fine tuning. But the new patriotism is, all in all, a very good thing. The ultimate allegiance of Christians is to Christ and the Church, which is universal. But the idea of political citizenship in the universal is chimerical. If we do not recognize our own, and are not willing to stand up in their defense, it is doubtful that we are capable of caring for others.

If there is such a thing as a national character, and we think there is, the character of America is now being tested as perhaps it has not been since 1941, and an awful lot has happened to us as a people over those sixty years. The question everyone is asking is whether the current level of national resolve can be sustained for the duration, which is likely to be a long time. Obviously, nobody knows. In a country that is said to be bent upon entertaining itself to death, the media have to date, with few exceptions, been commendably steady in their focus on the war. But in the absence of televised spectacles of great successes or great defeats in battle—or, God forbid, of new and more terrible attacks on the homeland—interest may wane. It is neither possible nor desirable to maintain a sense of crisis at fever pitch. Yet the country is, perhaps unavoidably, being subjected to confusing messages: be vigilant but not afraid; be prepared to sacrifice, but do your patriotic duty by going on a shopping spree; everything is different now, but defy the enemy by returning to business as usual. It is much too early to say how all this will sort itself out in the months and years ahead.

Many have remarked on the spontaneous resurgence of religion in public life. Some who had managed to convince themselves that ours is a secular or rapidly secularizing society expressed surprise. There is no reason for surprise. Whether this is, as some claim, the portent of another Great Awakening we do not know. More likely, the resurgence is simply giving public expression

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to what has been there all along in an overwhelmingly Christian nation rooted, albeit sometimes tenuously, in the Judeo-Christian moral tradition. It is noteworthy that, following the attack, the first gathering of national leadership and the first extended, and eloquent, address by the President was in a cathedral. And that Irving Berlin's "God Bless America" is getting equal time, at least, with the less religiously explicit national anthem. And that children in public schools gather in the classroom for prayer. And that the fallen beams of the World Trade Center, forming a cross, are blessed as the semi-official memorial to the victims. Intellectuals are forever in search of "the real America." The weeks following the attack of September 11 provided one answer to that search. It is an America that Tocqueville would recognize, even if it surprised, and no doubt offended, many intellectuals.

World Politics Reconfigured

September 11 did not change everything, but it did reconfigure world politics. That reconfiguration has already happened, and there is now no undoing of it. At the center of that reconfiguration is the world-historical role of Islam. For more than a decade, a few prescient scholars have been warning about the coming conflict, now commonly referred to by Samuel Huntington's phrase "the clash of civilizations." This journal has been attacked by Muslim organizations for drawing attention to that warning. This touches on questions of daunting delicacy and complexity. President Bush has repeatedly said that this is not a war with Islam and that the Muslims among us are not to be held responsible for what has happened. That is exactly the right thing for him to say, even though it is not the whole truth. The American war strategy is to split off the terrorist fanatics from the great majority of Muslims in the world. That is exactly the right thing to attempt, even though it may not succeed.

Returning from their holiday from history, Americans are surprised to discover that there are a billion Muslims in the world, most of whom, if they do not hate us, resent us very deeply. Nobody should have been surprised. It is not simply a few Palestinian teenagers who danced in joy as they watched the hijacked aircraft fly into the twin towers. Throughout the Muslim world, and not only in the Middle East, there were expressions of supreme satisfaction that America was at last getting what it deserved. It is not only the Osama bin Ladens who speak of a world divided into two camps, "the camp of the faithful and the camp of the infidel," or of America as "leading the crusade of the infidels." That is the fevered language heard daily in newspapers and broadcasts, frequently under government auspices, in large parts of the Muslim world. It is, for instance, the language of the main government newspaper in Egypt, a country that the U.S. supports with three billion dollars per year.

In the last ten years, the Islamist regime in Khartoum has killed or enslaved more than two million Christians and animists in its declared war against the infidels. In Nigeria, Muslims are fomenting a brutal civil war in order to establish Sharia as the law of the land, and similar movements are to be found as far away as East Timor and parts of the Philippines. Samuel Huntington does not exaggerate when, surveying conflicts all over the world, he speaks of "the bloody borders of Islam." Then there is the Middle East itself, where, in one of the exquisite ironies of history, radical Muslims view the State of Israel as the forward salient of Christendom and make no secret of their determination to drive it into the sea. Perhaps we will succeed in splitting off the fanatics from their host culture, or in simply crushing their networks of global reach, but that does not necessarily mean the culture will be transformed. More likely, angry Muslims will temporarily back off to seethe in impotent rage until an opportune time for vengeance. We must brace ourselves for the duration, and the duration is a prospect that stretches far into the future.

There are not in our homeland "many millions" of Muslims, as President Bush has mistakenly said, but, aside from African-American Muslims, there are about two million, and he is certainly right in saying that those who are here legally must be treated with the respect that we accord other immigrant groups. On this score, too, Americans have, with a very few exceptions, demonstrated their fundamental decency. At the same time, Muslims in this country, including those who are citizens, must make it clear beyond doubt that they have chosen our side. The several organizations that claim to speak for Muslims in this country must condemn without qualification the terrorist attacks and break decisively their ties to the network of terrorist organizations responsible. This they have not done to date. There has been a rash of interfaith services in this country, and it is fine to be assured that Islam means peace (in fact, the word Islam means submission), and to have Christian and Jewish clerics, along with non-Muslim academics, tell us that the problem is with a few marginal fanatics and not with Islam. Americans are notoriously nice and want to think well of others, and are therefore eager to believe such assurances, even if they are not true.

It is for Christians, Jews, and other non-Muslims to call for tolerance and understanding toward Muslims in this country. It is not for them to explain what is and is not "authentic Islam." That is a task for Muslims; not for secularized academics who happen to be Muslim by background but for Muslims who can speak believably from the heart of Muslim faith and life. It may seem

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unfair that Muslims, especially those who are American citizens, are required to demonstrate that they have really chosen our side, but then there are those terrorists who are aided and abetted by Muslims in this country, and there are those bodies that were buried, and some still buried, beneath the towers only a mile or so south of here, and there is a jihad declared and prosecuted by Muslims in the name of Islam, all adding up to yet another occasion for observing that life is unfair. When Islam is believably interpreted as a religion compatible with, and even supportive of, democratic freedoms and justice for all, there will no doubt be great relief in this country and the world. We may expect a boom in Islamic studies on our campuses, and a new generation inclined to a sympathetic understanding of Islam. That is a welcome prospect, provided the Islam that is presented is not Islam as we would wish it to be but Islam as believed and practiced by the Muslims of this country and the world.

Islam and the War of Centuries

President Bush is right to insist that this is not a war of religion, even if that may be more wish than fact. We of the West definitively put wars of religion behind us with the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. But that was a piece of the story of the West of which Islam was not part and for which Islam has no counterpart. Like it or not, and we decidedly do not like it, we are engaged in a war that can be defined in many ways, but is also and inescapably a war of religion. After September 11 many American pundits and editorialists asked, Why do they hate us so? One after another, they answered that they hate us because "America is free, rich, powerful, and good." There is something in that, but for the most part it is smug self-delusion. They hate us because they believe that the West, now indisputably led by America, has marginalized, exploited, and oppressed them for centuries. They hate us for the cultural decadence that we export and that many of them hate themselves for enjoying. They hate us because we have troops on their sacred soil, and they hate us because we support what they view as the alien State of Israel on their land. Intertwined with all the reasons they hate us, they hate us because we are the infidel who has for years beyond numbering in ways beyond numbering humiliated the chosen people of God.

Bernard Lewis of Princeton, one of the most astute students of Islam, has long been urging us to understand that, when Muslims speak of the West, they mean the Christian West. They mean Christendom. Many in the West want to believe that ours is a secularized culture, but Lewis reminds us that most Muslims view secularization itself as a form of specifically Christian decadence. Today many in the West are asking, Who are they? We cannot ask Who are they? without also asking Who are we? More and more, as this war continues, we may come to recognize that we are, however ambiguously, who they think we are, namely, the Christian West.

The memory of wars of religion, and the fear of their revival, make some commentators understandably hesitant to emphasize the religious dimension of the contest in which we are engaged. A few acknowledge that the contest is most importantly about religion, but then go on to trivialize that reality by saying we are at war with all forms of "fundamentalism," including the "religious right" in this country. There are many things wrong with that, not least the use of "fundamentalist" to describe any belief system we do not like. Fundamentalism refers to a very specific form of Protestantism that arose in America in the early twentieth century and has thoughtful, if theologically wrongheaded, proponents both here and elsewhere. Its use as a term of general opprobrium only confuses ourselves and those whom we should be trying to understand. Bin Laden and his like are not fundamentalists. Scholars urge upon us the distinction between Islam and Islamism, the latter denoting the militant faith and theocratic aspirations now arrayed against us. Call them militant Muslims, radical Muslims, monistic Muslims, or even fanatical Muslims. They call themselves faithful Muslims.

They are other. A welcome consequence of the war may be the collapse of the multiculturalism that has dominated the academy in recent years. The doctrine of multiculturalism is that all cultures, except our own, are equal, and we should celebrate the otherness of the other. In fact, multiculturalism in most of its forms refuses to let the other be other. They are not just like us. With respect to freedom, human rights, and the dignity of the person, their difference is not a diversity to be celebrated but a threat to be opposed. The terrorists have now unmistakably underscored their otherness, and with it the otherness of Islam. Ten years ago in the *Atlantic*, Bernard Lewis published an article, "The Roots of Muslim Rage," that now seems eerily prescient. "Islam," he wrote,

> has brought comfort and peace of mind to countless millions of men and women. It has given dignity and meaning to drab and impoverished lives. It has taught people of different races to live in brotherhood and people of different creeds to live side by side in reasonable tolerance. It inspired a great civilization in which others besides Muslims lived creative and useful lives and which, by its achievement, enriched the whole world. But Islam, like other religions, has also known periods when it inspired in some of its followers a mood of hatred and violence. It is our misfortune that

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> part, though by no means all or even most, of the Muslim world is now going through such a period, and that much, though again not all, of that hatred is directed against us.

Lewis described the fourteen centuries of history apart from which we cannot begin to understand the conflict of today. He ended on the note that not all Muslims conflate their faith with hatred of the West. "There are others, more tolerant, more open, that helped to inspire the great achievements of Islamic civilization in the past, and we may hope that these other traditions will in time prevail. But before this issue is decided there will be a hard struggle, in which we of the West can do little or nothing. Even the attempt might do harm, for these are issues that Muslims must decide among themselves." That was ten years ago. Ten years later, we do not have the option of doing little or nothing. We are at war. Pray that our cause will prevail. Pray that those other traditions in Islam will in time prevail. Pray that the one outcome does not preclude the other. FT

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THIS TIME

Millennials Floating

Alicia Mosier

This time last year, a book called *Millennials Rising* began to make headlines. The authors, Neil Howe and William Strauss, have of late astounded armchair sociologists with their predictions about the "turnings" of history, the approximately twenty-year cycles in which American society gets rich and complacent, comes to a crisis, unravels, and finally regains its moral bearings. In 1997's *The Fourth Turning*, Howe and Strauss predicted that early in the new millennium a crisis would occur that would challenge and eventually reverse the spirit of materialism and cynicism that characterized the 1990s. What's more, they argued, the new generation—the so-called Millennials, born in or after 1982—would be at the ready to take the reins in the new era of sober responsibility. As of September 11, the crisis has arrived; we are not likely to see its resolution for many years. What remains uncertain is whether this new generation (which in the next decade will come to make up 41 percent of the U.S. population) is really prepared to handle what comes next.

Howe and Strauss described the Millennials—the first of whom entered college this year—as the most coddled, most monied, most respectful, most morally traditional, most conformist, most team-oriented, most ambitious, most optimistic, and all-around sweetest group of young people to come along in a very long while. They predicted that the Millennial generation was shaping up to be the next Greatest Generation, similar in upbringing and ideals to the one that fought in World War II. In the past few years, when Americans (especially those on the right) have been pining for the age of heroes and honor, the Greatest Generation has been the subject of much nostalgic glorification. Tom Brokaw's book of that title was a huge best-seller; *Saving Private Ryan* was a critical and box-office smash; earlier this year, HBO's series *Band of Brothers* boasted huge audiences. Even before September 11, the announcement that a second generation of Jimmy Stewarts and Ginger Rogerses stood in the wings of history was invigorating news.

In the months since the terrorist attack, we have heard very little from Howe and Strauss—but we have heard a lot from the Millennials. What they have been saying may explain the virtual disappearance from public view of the authors who touted their arrival last year. Much has already been made of the outburst of campus hand-wringing that began almost immediately after September 11. A representative quote came from an undergraduate at the University of Wisconsin: "[This] was done by people who hate," he said, "and I don't think hate has a color or ethnicity." Not all young people responded so insipidly. Other reports, especially from the Midwest, describe a patriotism that ranges from tepid to robust; still others indicate a simple lack of interest, apart from a vague sense that this is all very bad. In New York, young people took to the parks for collective expressions of grief that combined Scripture verses and "The Star-Spangled Banner" with Native American healing ceremonies and poems by Rumi.

This is the new Greatest Generation? In their fawning study, Howe and Strauss hinted that the Millennials were a complicated mix, but they could not anticipate how bizarre the mix would turn out to be. In fact, at least to this writer (who is Generation X), the reaction of those young collegians makes perfect sense: they are the last children of the Baby Boomers, and they have absorbed both the bourgeois and the bohemian elements of the lifestyle described by David Brooks in his book *Bobos in Paradise*.

This is a generation for whom the words "tolerance" and "diversity" come as naturally as "cool" and "gross" and "bandwidth," and who see "selfishness" as the primary cause of social problems (while, in only one of the many paradoxes attending these young people, "a lack of morality/ethics in society" stands at the bottom of the list of causes, according to a 1998 Roper poll). "Spirituality" is booming, technology permeates every sphere of life, and the anti-globalization movement has become a major part of the youth culture (even though Millennials do not consider themselves especially "political").

The other side of that soft liberal ethos is a rigidly bourgeois one: authority must be respected, time must be used wisely, risk must be avoided, and sex must be safe. (At no time in history have child safety regulations been so wide-ranging.) It's the bourgeois ethic that rules in schools—think zero tolerance, uniforms, teamwork, and class pledges to "be part of the solution." Among these incessantly busy young people, niceness and responsibility are the cardinal virtues; intolerance (and its moral twin, "imposing your views on others") is the mortal sin.

In the face of an act of violence against America and, in truth, against the whole of Western Civilization, what are young people with such a two-dimensional set of values—and without a traditional vocabulary of evil and justice—to do? For one thing, they can follow the lead of their professors. Millennials are remarkable for

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the esteem in which they hold their elders. But many of the best and brightest of the Boomer generation can find nothing more deserving of censure than the America that has allowed them their endowed chairs in multicultural studies. How can a smart Ivy League undergraduate defend a country that, he believes, is so deformed by capitalist oppression? Concerns of this sort, however, are not limited to the left. Leading voices in the conservative Christian world are targeting America too, though for far more serious reasons: this is a nation that, among other things, allows the murder of millions of innocent children every year. How can a Christian student stand up, even in wartime, for a country like that?

Moreover, does one's "country" even matter anymore? The same young people who decry globalization in the corporate sphere do not hesitate to identify themselves as part of the global village. Who needs a country when you've got the Internet? On the left, on the right, and in the large gray area in between, many young people simply do not feel that America is *their* country. They just happen to be here, and are delighted to reap the many rewards of the place in which they fortuitously find themselves. They love being Americans, but honoring America is a problem. They find it difficult to understand how a nation may be defended wholeheartedly even if it makes mistakes. How to identify real evil—let alone face it down—is a task that is not even on the radar.

Both their parents and their teachers have left young people to figure out the ultimate values on their own. They have concluded that the vast majority of bad things can be fixed by hard work and good intentions. Of course, young people in every age are idealists. They ardently desire a better world—indeed, they often imagine a world in which any trace of hatred or poverty has been wiped out. For the Millennials, such a world doesn't seem so far away. Having grown up in the post-Reagan era—a time of unprecedented peace and prosperity—they assume that that era's circumstances constituted the natural state of things. The foe the younger generation now faces is not only the one against whom they may be called to fight in military service. It is their own assumptions about the existence of real goods and evils, their own understanding of what makes possible the way of life which, until this point, they believed to be the taken for granted reality.

In an article titled "The Organization Kid," published last spring in the *Atlantic*, Brooks lamented the absence of a "tragic sense of life"—an Augustinian perspective—among this younger generation. Even as he affirmed the fundamental good-naturedness and responsibility of the kids themselves, Brooks worried about the sort of soul that emerges from an upbringing so disconnected from traditions of moral education. He concluded:

> [These young people] live in a country that has lost, in its frenetic seeking after happiness and success, the language of sin and character-building through combat with sin. . . . All this ambition and aspiration is looking for new tests to ace, new clubs to be president of, new services to perform, but finding that none of these challenges is the ultimate challenge, and none of the rewards is the ultimate reward.

Some commentators have predicted that this new war will provide just that sort of broader horizon to the lives of the Millennials. It will be a wake-up call, some say: the language of virtue will take over from the language of instant messaging; American youth will begin to look at life in a more nuanced, even Augustianian, way. Given that no one has prepared this generation to face the future with a "tragic sense of life," it is not surprising that such a sensibility does not seem to have taken hold in them in the brief time that has passed since September 11. Moral subtlety does not happen overnight. And few of these kids have been reared with stories of the glory of fighting for a noble cause. But the Millennial generation doesn't have to be heroic just yet. Like young people of every generation, they have to grow up—now a good deal more quickly than before. ET

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Opinion

Passion Stomp

Michael Linton

The ovation at the close of its premiere in Stuttgart was so raucous that people out on the street thought a pop concert was ending. In Boston the critics were ecstatic, one writing that at the end "the crowd made a sound that will echo in the musical world for some time." The *Wall Street Journal* called it "visceral" and "explosive." The *New York Times* said it was "wonderful . . . resound[ing] with Christian ardor," and devoted a half page to the composer's photo. A "miracle," summarized the *Los Angeles Times*, which went on to praise its "irresistible religious egalitarian spirit." It's a virtual shoo-in for both the Pulitzer and the Grawemeyer (the $200,000 musical equivalent of the Nobel Prize).

Not in anyone's memory has a new piece of music received the kind of accolades that have been heaped upon Osvaldo Golijov's Spanish-language setting of *The Passion According to St. Mark*, propelling the barely forty-year-old composer into the forefront of international musicians. The work has even garnered for Golijov a major commission from Soli Deo Gloria, the Wheaton, Illinois, based foundation dedicated to spreading "the message of God's greatness and goodness through the most powerful music of our time."

Funny that nobody noticed that some of the Boston Symphony musicians found the piece so unpleasant that they wore earplugs during their performance. And it's hard to know where the "Christian ardor" is in a piece that at one point presents Jesus as a disembodied transsexual lunatic. While the work certainly has moments of undeniable brilliance, Golijov's *Passion* is for the most part a noisy piece of insubstantial musical glitz. As for its relationship with Mark's text, Golijov ignores much of its human and divine drama while at the same time deliberately distorting its theological message. So why all the cheers?

The piece was the brainchild of noted conductor Helmuth Rilling. To mark the 250th anniversary of the death of Johann Sebastian Bach in 2000, Rilling commissioned four composers to write major works evocative of the great composer's sacred choral legacy. Sofia Gubaidulina, Russia's leading composer, wrote a Russian and Slavonic St. John Passion. Tan Dun, the Chinese-American who won an Oscar last year for his score to *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, wrote a *Water Passion after St. Matthew*. The German Wolfgang Rihm wrote a St. Luke Passion. Golijov, an Argentinean trained in Israel and the University of Pennsylvania and now teaching in Massachusetts, was given the Markan account. His *La Pasión Según San Marcos* premiered on September 5, 2000 in Stuttgart and was again performed last February in Boston.

Golijov's intent is to present a "Latin American" passion, and his models are the traditional music of Cuba and Brazil. Reducing his orchestra to paired trumpets and trombones with strings (without violas), Golijov then augments this ensemble with a large Latin-American percussion battery, piano, guitar, and accordion. The instruments are amplified electronically and sometimes also subjected to electronic manipulation (such as added reverberation and digital delay). Divided choruses and several soloists carry the text, and there are movements for dancers.

Although he makes use of chords built in fourths and fifths (instead of the traditional thirds), Golijov's harmony is largely modal and unthreatening to even the most conservative musical tastes. His melodies often strike the ear as folk songs with their repetitions of simple intervals, but on occasion they become elaborate cantilations equally evocative of Arab and Spanish song. (The beautiful C major aria *Lua Descolorida* for mezzo soprano accompanied by paired violins and celli is perhaps the *Passion*'s best moment and will certainly have a concert life of its own.)

But it is Golijov's percussion that provides most of the musical propulsion. Golijov recreates the rhythms of street festivals, and as anyone can attest who has ever heard the bells, claves, tom-toms, and ago-gos of the Brazilian carnival, these cadences can be intoxicating. For instance in "Bajá Jesú" Golijov writes a viscerally thrilling samba for the crowd's strut to Golgotha. But the strength of these motor rhythms is also their weakness. It is easy for these kinds of devices to become a kind of musical wallpaper, of little real interest itself but useful for camouflaging holes in a composer's imagination. If they go on too long they lose even the purpose of camouflage and become just an irritating din. In Golijov's hands the percussion far too often becomes just that: a mind-numbing racket (hence the Boston musicians' ear plugs).

But replacing music with noise isn't the biggest problem of Golijov's *Passion*. It's what he does with the Markan text. Much was been made in the press about Golijov being a Jew and of the supposed curiosity of a Jew composing a setting of the Passion (when he was offered the commission Golijov said that he wasn't all that famil-

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iar with the story and had to go read it). On one level his Jewishness has no more significance than the ethnicity of any other artist who deals with Christian themes without having any personal commitment to the faith of which they testify (such as Brahms, for instance).

But on another level Golijov's ethnicity is noteworthy. Golijov diminishes Jewish culpability in Jesus' death by editing out of Mark's text most passages that present Jewish officialdom in a less than benign light. In Golijov's Mark the high priest does not tear his clothes upon hearing Jesus' *ego emi*, Pilate does not suspect envy as being the reason for the priests' hatred of Jesus, the priests do not agitate the crowd, and they do not mock Jesus on the cross. Indeed, Golijov even excises Pilate's offer of Barabbas and the mob's cries of "Crucify!"

Golijov's politically correct reworking of the Gospel text extends to his characterizations. Mark's account is full of marvelous vignettes. There is the woman who washes Jesus' feet, Pilate marveling at Jesus' silence, the fury of the high priest, the mockery of the men crucified with Jesus, the centurion beneath the cross. Each of these should offer the composer not only opportunities for drama and but also for character illumination. But Golijov either ignores these figures or provides them with music that does nothing to illuminate their characters.

For instance, when Jesus stands silent before a Pilate who "wonders" at what he sees (Mark 15:5), Golijov has his chorus break out in a flamenco-like stomp. Bach, or in a secular context, Verdi, Wagner, or Puccini, at such a moment would have used music to sharpen our understanding of Pilate. The music would have reflected and expressed the character's psychology. (An excellent example is the accompaniment with which Bach sets Jesus' "Thou sayest" retort to Judas in the *St. Matthew Passion*. In four beats of sorrowful music Bach shows us the depth of love Jesus had even for his betrayer.) But Golijov's stomping chorus, while a spectacular theatrical effect, tells us nothing about Pilate or Jesus. It is simply part of the sonic wash on which Golijov floats a story. This absence of characterization robs Mark's Gospel of the people who populate it. Golijov's story isn't about people. It's about types.

This becomes most problematic in Golijov's treatment of Jesus. In published remarks Golijov has said that he thought of Jesus as a Che Guevara-like figure representing the "collective spirit" of the Latin American people. Golijov de-persons Jesus, making him into a symbol. He accomplishes this first by not having his words sung by one singer but instead assigning them to a consortium of singers.

Furthermore, by having sopranos and altos usually sing Jesus' words (there is one brief passage where a few of Jesus' words are sung by a quartet of tenors), Golijov makes the Son of God weirdly androgynous. When Jesus tells the Sanhedrin that they will see the Son of Man "coming in the clouds of heaven" (Mark 14:62), Golijov extends Mark's text by a long passage of nonsense syllables to which he sets the *Passion*'s most contorted and chromatic melody. Sung by a mezzo-soprano doubled by trumpets, this passage of scat singing not only makes Jesus appear feminine, but dangerously deranged (Golijov's marks the score at this point "possessed, at great speed").

Mark's story is not about revolutionary symbols or eccentric types, and Christians do not name as creation's Lord and Savior a "type" or a "symbol." They name Jesus. The story of Jesus' death and resurrection illuminates to Christians both the depth of their own guilt and the even more boundless expanses of God's love. But this, perhaps understandably, is a story that Golijov just doesn't get. Instead, he tells but one more tale in the "bad things happening to good people" genre, this one sauced up with carnival rhythms.

So, again, why the cheers? One of the German critics knew. "What was expected was a somber piece about Jesus' sufferings, melancholy and reverent. Instead we had a clapping chorus, exuberant dancing musicians, bongos, a black Christ, and dance rhythms at the Crucifixion." This Passion is fun. Tragic yes, but not a tragedy of our—or anybody's—making. Spiritual of course, but not a spirituality cramped by the constraints of doctrine or tradition. Artistic certainly, but not an art that either requires or rewards much thought (you can even perform it deaf). It's even multicultural. Golijov has given the millennium's international Bobos just the kind of Passion they want: a no fault, no consequence, Good Friday-lite experience you can dance to. The only surprise is that the cheering stopped so soon. Golgotha? Let's samba!

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A Lethal Evolution

Nancy Valko

It started with a headache. It ended with a shocking death, a devastated family, a tarnished reputation for a hospital, and growing concern about the state of ethics in Catholic health care.

While considerable attention is now focused on assisted suicide, a quiet but lethal evolution of the so-

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called "right to die" has been taking place in hospitals and nursing homes all over the U.S., even in Catholic health care institutions

The tragic "right to die" case of Steven Becker in St. Louis last year was the first such case in a Catholic hospital to garner any media attention, and this was only because Steven's mother, Marge Sutter, was willing to take legal action to save her son. Few family members are courageous enough to take on a legal system that rarely supports the right to life in such cases.

Steven Becker was a twenty-eight-year-old father of three small boys who was admitted to St. John's Mercy Medical Center in St. Louis in March 2000 because of severe headaches. According to his family, Steven knew the situation was serious and that brain surgery was contemplated.

On admission, he was offered a health care directive as required by law but he refused to sign it. Such directives, which encompass the well-known "living will" as well as documents assigning health care decision making to a family member or others, are designed to allow a person to refuse even life-saving treatment or medical care if the person becomes mentally incapacitated.

A few days later, Steven unexpectedly became unresponsive during a test and an emergency operation was performed to relieve the pressure on his brain. He was placed on a ventilator for a few days until he could breathe on his own again, but he did not regain full consciousness.

Rehabilitation was started and, according to family members and progress notes included in the public record, Steven showed some signs of responsiveness. But several weeks after the operation, Steven's wife, Christie, accepted the prognosis that Steven would not improve and acquiesced to the hospital ethics committee's recommendation of withdrawing his tube feedings. She was supported in her decision by her parish priest.

According to public court records, St. John's helped Christie make funeral arrangements and offered counseling for the children in anticipation of Steven's impending demise.

Alarmed at the unusual speed with which her son was declared a hopeless case, Steven's mother, Marge, asked for guardianship of Steven, her only child, and a judge granted a temporary stay of the food and water withdrawal pending a court hearing three months later. The court also appointed James Wright, Jr., a lawyer, as a temporary guardian to investigate the situation and make a recommendation. Mr. Wright made it clear from the beginning that his main concern was whether or not Steven was in a "permanent vegetative state" and thus had no chance for a "meaningful life." The case made the front page of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* on June 2, 2000, which portrayed it as just another tragic family dispute. But many readers were alarmed that a Catholic hospital was supporting death by dehydration for a non-dying disabled man.

In a newspaper interview, Sister Pat Talone, the hospital's ethicist, defended the committee's recommendation to withdraw treatment by saying that the group "examines medical reality as well as social, spiritual, and ethical principles before making a recommendation."

Pro-life and disability activists picketed the hospital, protesting its intention to withdraw feedings. A month later, Archbishop Justin Rigali issued a statement reiterating the Church's position on such matters, citing several Church sources including Pope John Paul II's 1998 statement calling medically assisted food and water "an ordinary means of preserving life."

When it was revealed that rehabilitation efforts were also stopped with the decision to end the tube feedings and that even antibiotics were now considered "life support," an editorial in the *St. Louis Review* (the archdiocesan newspaper) pointed out that "In a situation where the health of the patient depends not only upon food and water, but on other forms of care and treatment, the purpose of providing food and water should not be undermined by a neglect of the other forms of care. A patient's life might depend not only upon basic forms of medical treatment such as antibiotics, but upon simple care designed to minimize infection and bolster physical, mental, and physiological functioning."

After September court hearings, which were closed to the public and press, Judge Mark Seigel accepted the recommendation of the court-appointed guardian and gave guardianship of Steven to his wife. Mr. Wright, the lawyer/guardian, maintained that, even in the absence of a "living will" or other advance directive, Steven would have wanted to die in order to spare his family further grief and cited the six-year-old son's question, "When is daddy going to leave the hospital and go to heaven?" to justify the need to speed Steven's death.

A few days after the court decision, while an appeal was being planned, Steven was spirited out of the hospital during the night. The hospital, which had finally accepted the Archbishop's position and thus would not allow Steven's feeding tube to be removed on its premises, now refused to disclose his whereabouts.

An emergency restraining order against withdrawing feedings was obtained by Steven's mother, but no one was able to serve it because his location was unknown. As a desperate search began, the *Post-Dispatch* reported that the feedings had already been stopped.

Several days later and just one hour before a court hearing on extending the restraining order against withdrawing feedings, it was announced that Steven had died at home, attended by a nurse, a doctor, and a parish priest.

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In the aftermath of the case, Steven's mother was left with thousands of dollars in legal bills and the pain of losing a son whose death she was unable to prevent or even witness. Sr. Talone, the St. John's ethicist, was subsequently promoted to director of ethics for the Catholic Health Association. Meanwhile, Archbishop Rigali's intervention was publicly condemned by several prominent Catholic theologians and ethicists.

Thirty years ago, I worked as a nurse in the intensive care unit (ICU) at the very same St. John's Mercy Medical Center. In those days, Euthanasia Education Councils and "living wills" did not yet exist, and calling a patient a "vegetable" was a slur, not a diagnosis.

At that time, there was a consensus among the medical and nursing professions that it was wrong to cause or hasten death, and we knew the difference between ordinary and extraordinary treatment decisions. Medical and nursing students were taught that those patients who could not speak for themselves—for example, infants and the severely disabled—deserved special protection from harm because of their vulnerability. Removing a feeding tube to end a patient's life was simply unthinkable.

Back then, when a patient's death appeared to be inevitable, we talked to families about DNR (do not resuscitate) orders and about the option of not initiating more aggressive treatment. But one thing we did not do was talk about withdrawing treatment in order to speed the patient's death.

I particularly remember one young man who was admitted in a coma after a car accident. The neurosurgeon who examined him predicted he would be dead by morning or become a "vegetable." I was shocked that the doctor said this in front of the patient.

But "Mike" didn't die, and, after a few weeks, he could move a finger on command and say hi. We nurses were excited, but became baffled when Mike didn't respond to the neurosurgeon, even with deep pain stimulation. Mike left our unit and we assumed he would spend the rest of his life in a nursing home.

Two years later, a handsome young man strode into our ICU, announced he was Mike, and thanked us for saving his life. We were stunned. Laughing, I told him that he wouldn't remember this, but he used to respond a little to us nurses but didn't for the neurosurgeon. The laughter stopped when Mike revealed that he purposely hadn't responded to the doctor because he had heard him call him a vegetable and it made him angry. Today, Mike would probably be dead because of his refusal to respond to a doctor.

In hospitals all over the country today—Catholic and non-Catholic alike—families are told by doctors with supreme confidence that their loved ones are hopeless and that all treatment should be withheld or withdrawn in order to allow them to die. This often happens within hours, days, or weeks of a person suffering a brain injury, stroke, or critical illness. I have even seen such patients described as "brain dead" so that reluctant families might be induced to withdraw treatment.

There is now a proliferation of "end of life" educational programs that equate the care of the severely brain-injured with the care of the truly dying. Thus death is virtually celebrated as a way to be reunited with God as well as a legal exercise in choosing the so-called "right to die." Even routine medical treatment often seems to be viewed as an impediment to these happy results.

As is often the case, today's troubling practices have their origins in the bad ideas of the past. The theological rationale for withdrawing feedings from the so-called "vegetative" person was first provided by such ethicists as Father Kevin O'Rourke, now director emeritus of The Center for Health Care Ethics in St. Louis. Like some other ethicists, he claimed that the presumed absence of mental function precluded "vegetative" patients from pursuing the "spiritual purposes of life," and thus that a simple feeding tube was an example of extraordinary treatment which could be ethically withheld or withdrawn. In a 1991 interview, Fr. O'Rourke even dismissed the moral imperative of spoon-feeding such patients, asserting that it should be undertaken only "if there is medical evidence that the (brain) injury is reversible—that [the patient] would be able to know, love, relate to people."

There was no medical breakthrough that initiated this new way of thinking about brain-injured people, but rather a change of spiritual outlook. The example of the Good Samaritan who saved the unconscious man and even paid for his care was replaced with concerns about mental and spiritual "quality of life."

Borrowing from the new secular ethic of "compassionate death," even the Catholic Health Association now publishes articles encouraging "futility policies" for hospital ethics committees that enable them to force the withdrawal of treatment from patients or families who do not make the "right" choice. Articles on rationing health care are presented as being motivated by concerns over "social justice," which simply means that the community is assumed to take precedence over the individual patient.

What can we do to reverse this trend? Policies like those of Archbishop Rigali, which forbid the denial of food and water to the non-dying in St. Louis Catholic institutions, are certainly a promising start. But better educational resources are also needed. Pope John Paul II himself has said that "a great teaching effort is needed to clarify the substantive moral difference between

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discontinuing medical procedures that may be burdensome, dangerous, or disproportionate to the expected outcome"—what the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* calls "the refusal of 'over-zealous' treatment" (2278)—"and taking away the ordinary means of preserving life, such as feeding, hydration, and normal medical care."

On a more practical level, much more can be done to improve the lives of the "vegetative." Rather than the common policy of discharging such patients to nursing homes when family members insist on continued treatment or the insurance money runs out, Catholic institutions could develop sorely needed long-term rehabilitation facilities that could build on the encouraging work being done with such patients in England and Israel. As Dr. Eugene Diamond has written, such a facility "might well be a place where Christian witness and science combine to investigate PVS (persistent vegetative state) and enhance its favorable outcome."

Going further, the federal law mandating that all patients be offered "living wills" or other advanced directives to "pre-choose" withdrawal of treatment could be met in Catholic hospitals by offering documents that are more protective and clearly reflect Catholic principles. And perhaps the bishops could provide oversight of Catholic ethics teaching and practice on the order of the new oversight of Catholic theology in Catholic universities.

At the very least, we need to counteract the prevailing attitude that it is better to be dead than disabled, and that people in need are burdens to themselves and others. True dignity is inherent in us all and is not extinguished by dependence on others. Which is to say, we need above all to bring back the ideal of the Good Samaritan.

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The Indulgence Controversy, Again

Michael Root

Most Protestants may not be able to give a precise explanation of the doctrine of justification or, for that matter, of any other central doctrine of the Reformation, but they often have a vague sense that Martin Luther's protest began with an attack on indulgences. What exactly indulgences were may be a bit foggy for them, but they know indulgences were something bad, very Roman Catholic, and had something to do with working or, worse, buying one's way into heaven.

Confusion thus abounded when, in the midst of the ecumenical publicity surrounding the Lutheran-Catholic *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, the papal bull officially announcing the Jubilee Year 2000 gave a significant place to the indulgence attached to the Jubilee. This bull was soon followed by a new edition of the *Enchiridion Indulgentiarum*, the official handbook of indulgences. (Ironic in light of the ecumenical brouhaha, the *Enchiridion* includes a new plenary indulgence relating to participation in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.)

If Catholics have agreed that the justified are accepted by God through Christ's grace alone, as the *Joint Declaration* says, then how can the Vatican proclaim an indulgence attached to various "good works" related to the Jubilee? For Lutheran critics of the *Joint Declaration*, the indulgence was a sign that they were right after all, although the Lutheran church leadership did not allow that issue to become a major problem. The World Alliance of Reformed Churches, however, withdrew its representative to the Ecumenical Commission for the Jubilee after a civil but testy exchange of letters with the Vatican.

Whatever else one may say about indulgences, they are not quite what they used to be. (Peter Neuner, Catholic professor of theology at Munich, titled a recent article "Is This Still an Indulgence?") Many of the abuses that surrounded indulgences in the early Reformation era (e.g., attaching an indulgence to the good work of a financial contribution, which amounted to the sale of indulgences) were banned already by the Council of Trent and the reforms of the Catholic Reformation. The early twentieth century saw massive historical investigations into the origin of indulgences by Nikolaus Paulus and Bernhard Poschmann. These studies showed the roots of indulgences in the solidarity of the Church with persons carrying out the sometimes severe (but relatively infrequent) public penances required by the early Church; they also showed how indulgences changed as penance itself changed with the rise of frequent private confession. Indulgences were not, as Protestant polemic asserted, the invention of cynical church princes to bilk the credulous, but an institution invented by no one, the creation of a series of incremental changes that occurred over centuries.

This historical scholarship provided the background for a series of theological and doctrinal statements that have recast the theological understanding of indul-

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gences. Karl Rahner's articles on indulgences from the 1950s and 1960s have had a far-reaching influence (see below). The 1967 papal constitution on indulgences, *Indulgentiarum Doctrina*, did not fully endorse Rahner's interpretation, but Rahner insisted that the constitution did not reject his interpretation either. Recent Vatican statements on indulgences produced in connection with the Jubilee have moved even closer to the Rahner outlook, especially in a papal catechesis on indulgences given in September 1999.

Despite unclarity in some medieval statements, indulgences have never provided forgiveness, salvation, or justification. They are aids in the struggle with the consequences of sin that forgiveness does not remove, the effects of sin on the self and others that are referred to as "temporal punishments" (whether "punishment" is the most useful category for understanding these effects can be debated). An indulgence is an expression of the solidarity of the wider Church (which includes Christ, Mary, and all the saints) with the person who is willing to undertake special efforts in addressing those effects or temporal punishments. If we truly believe that "the prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective" (James 5:16), then can that solidarity be without result?

So far, so good; and such Protestant theologians as the young Dietrich Bonhoeffer have suggested ideas very similar to these. The ecumenical problem develops with the way this general idea becomes specific in the practice of indulgences. First, this solidarity of the Church with the penitent has come to be understood as an aid the Church can directly administer. As the 1967 Constitution puts it, the Church "intervenes with its authority to dispense to the faithful, provided they have the right dispositions, the treasure of satisfactions which Christ and the saints won for the remission of temporal punishments." Even if one ignores the question of whether saints win satisfactions, there is still the question of where the Church gets the specific authority to dispense this treasure. If it is the same authority by which the Church forgives sin, then why cannot the priest in confession remit the temporal punishments along with the eternal punishment?

Official documents say less about the source of this authority than most suppose. Rahner suggests that the treasury is not directly "dispensed," but rather an indulgence is an "authoritative prayer" by the *totus Christus*—Christ and his Body, the Church—to the Father, a prayer we can be morally certain will be answered. The 1967 Constitution seemed particularly wary of this approach, but the papal catechesis of September 1999 adopted it. John Paul said that an indulgence is "the expression of the Church's full confidence of being heard by the Father when—in view of Christ's merits and, by his gift, those of Our Lady and the saints—she asks him to mitigate or cancel the painful aspect of punishment."

Another problem for Protestants is the quantifiable nature of indulgences. A plenary indulgence removes all temporal punishments; a partial indulgence only some of these punishments. But are the consequences of sin and our struggle with them quantifiable in this way? The canonical penances of the early Church were quantifiable, but once the object of an indulgence is understood in terms of a personal struggle with effects of sin, can aid be doled out in statable sums? The 1967 Constitution did away with the measurement of partial indulgences by days of penance or purgatory, declaring instead that whatever is the penitential effect of the good work associated with an indulgence, a partial indulgence doubles that effect. This shift may do away with the crudest quantification, but it still seems closer to a commercial transaction than the dynamics of conversion. (I have heard this new scheme compared to a matching funds system or even "double coupon days" at a supermarket.)

A more plausible assertion would be that an indulgence gives whatever aid the penitent can use. The 1967 Constitution already teaches that a plenary indulgence can be received to its full effect only if the penitent is "free from all attachment to any sin at all, even venial sin," a difficult standard to meet. When such attachments are present, the plenary indulgence is received as if it were a partial indulgence. Could one say that all indulgences are plenary for those who are truly ready to struggle with all the effects of sin in their lives? Most of us, of course, are still attached to some of those effects and are not struggling against them all that strongly. For us, no indulgence can be plenary. An indulgence is an aid in that struggle, not a substitute for it. (That indulgences undercut true penance was the central argument in Luther's original critique.)

Indulgences are understood to apply also to those in purgatory. For the popular mind, purgatory is what indulgences are all about. Nevertheless, the actual teaching about indulgences is logically independent of the concept of purgatory. In addition, the Catholic Church clearly differentiates its authority over temporal punishments in this life and the purification taking place in purgatory. An indulgence can only be applied to those in purgatory "by way of prayer."

Recent Catholic teaching, especially the various texts related to the Jubilee, go far to situate indulgences within a genuine pursuit of repentance in daily life and to remove the rather impersonal, quid pro quo transactional language that has sometimes been associated with them. These recent discussions of indulgences are in fact far closer to the first of Luther's Nine-

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ty-five Theses on Indulgences—which stated that when Jesus called for persons to repent, he "willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance"—than are most recent Protestant statements on the Christian life.

Nevertheless, indulgences still point to what may be the nub of Catholic-Protestant differences, the question of the role of the Church in the mediation of Christ's grace. That the Church does play a role in that mediation should be beyond doubt. It is the Church, after all, that proclaims the gospel and celebrates the means of grace. Luther's *Large Catechism* could thus call the Church "the mother that begets and bears every Christian through the Word of God." But even if the Church's role in that mediation is essentially instrumental, does it make any sort of contribution of its own to that process? Pastor Salvatore Ricciardi, the Reformed member of the Jubilee Ecumenical Commission who withdrew because of the Jubilee indulgence, stated in a letter that the "location of our indulgence is nothing other than Christ crucified and risen; and the Church cannot be an administrator to its conditions, but only a pure and simple witness."

The conceptual categories used in this assertion may not be fully adequate, but they indicate the deeper issues that the debate over indulgences points toward. Thus, when Mary, the preeminent member of the Church (*Lumen Gentium* 53), said her "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord," was she giving a "pure and simple witness"? Or was she making a human contribution to the history of salvation (although a contribution made only as moved by grace)? The questions directly involved in indulgences are not as profound as those directly raised by the role of the Blessed Virgin, but they point toward the same complex nexus of fundamental ecclesiological questions that now need to be discussed.

To its credit, the Vatican did not ignore or brush aside the Protestant concerns prompted by the Jubilee indulgence. The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity sponsored a brief theological consultation on indulgences earlier this year in Rome, with participation by Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed representatives. Besides the usual professors and staff, the President of the Council and the General Secretaries of the Lutheran World Federation and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches were present. The goal was not an agreement on indulgences, but rather a clearer understanding both of indulgences themselves and of the varying Lutheran and Reformed objections to them. The papers from this consultation (to my mind unfortunately more historical than systematic) should be published in the near future.

Indulgences do not play a major role in the piety of many Catholics. They are not a part of the universal tradition shared by East and West, but a specifically Western medieval development. They are a minor ecumenical obstacle, at most. How we as Catholics and non-Catholics react to indulgences, however, can be a test of our ecumenical will. Are we willing both to read the intentions of the other in the best possible light, as Luther thought the Eighth Commandment required, and to face the genuine theological differences that still separate us with critical but open minds committed to the pursuit of the truth? Real ecumenism requires both.

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Ground Zero: A Journal

Vincent Druding

September 11 was to be my first day of work at a new job in downtown Manhattan. Though New York was still very new to me, it was immediately obvious that something was terribly wrong. As I climbed the stairs of the subway just a few blocks from the World Trade Center, there was a palpable feeling of panic in the air as people stared, horrified, into the sky. I followed their gaze upward and I instantly understood. Smoke and fire were gushing from a gaping hole in the smooth, silvery surface of the right-hand tower.

I asked someone nearby if he knew what had happened, and he said it was a bomb. Another man walked over and declared, "No, it was a plane, a plane flew right into building. . . ." Then an enormous explosion drowned out his words. Above our heads, an orange fireball swallowed the top of the second tower, as clouds of paper filled the sky above us. Hundreds of people began scattering. I ran across the street to the Municipal Building and up to a shrieking woman who stammered through her sobs that she had seen a large blue and white plane slam into the building. We stared slack-jawed as sections of the building's metallic facade fell in chunks to the ground. It took a few moments until we realized that some of those falling pieces were not metal at all, but rather human beings leaping eighty or more stories to their deaths—right before our eyes. All I could think to do was make the sign of the cross.

As I stood there in disbelief, a man next to me with a messaging pager said that the Pentagon had just been hit. I grabbed at his pager to read it for myself. Then came the confusion and rumors on the street: "The Capitol's been attacked!" "The State Department has been bombed!" "The Supreme Court is in flames!" "Camp David is burning!" "A plane is on its way to the White House!"

During all this, the fire trucks had been racing past on their way to the Towers. I must have seen twelve of them rush past our corner. In the coming hours and days, I often wondered how many of the men on those trucks died just minutes later.

Soon the NYPD asked us to evacuate the area. It was only a minute after we began to walk uptown and away from the Towers that the sound of several claps of thunder began to rip through the air just over my shoulder. I turned around and saw with my own eyes a sight of pure horror, as the left-hand tower began to collapse into a massive white cloud. Our walk quickly became a run, and then a stampede.

Eventually, as we got farther away from the cataclysm, our pace slowed back down. I caught my breath, trying to absorb what I had just witnessed, when an olive-skinned man with a mustache and briefcase walking to my right began to intone: "You see what happens! All the Palestinians want is a place to call home, a small piece of land. We continue to fund the Israelis, we supply them with money and weapons, we support the persecution of a people for decades, and you see what happens! It should not have come to this. It didn't have to come to this! They have had enough, and you see how they respond—they've got our attention now."

Letting him push on without me, I paused with several hundred others at the Manhattan Bridge to watch the lone burning tower. We had outrun the smoke and dust unscathed, but now thousands of others followed behind us. They were in groups of three or four, marching toward midtown, some sprinkled with ash, many others caked with a dust that had hardened on their skin as it mixed with sweat and traces of blood. They

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passed by like ghosts—grayish-white figures carrying bags, suitcases, and purses. Extras from the set of a horror film, quietly walking home.

As I followed them uptown, a businessman from Atlanta who was in New York on business told me that he couldn't get through to his wife on his cell phone; he knew she'd be scared as hell. "I was on the 81st floor, and we were probably the last to get out, but the firefighters kept coming in, heading up as we headed down. They just kept filing up the stairs."

Then, a sudden gasp from a group of Chinese men and women on the corner, and we turned to watch the second tower follow the fate of the first. After a few seconds, I continued my dazed trek to my apartment on 19th Street.

I'm not sure why I went back. The morning of the twelfth I heard a homily at Mass imploring Christians not to yield to the pain and evil but to overcome adversity with faith. That message stuck with me.

The van of volunteers drove us through the smoking and dusty streets of lower Manhattan, cluttered with countless thousands of sheets of paper; all around us, cars and emergency vehicles looked like they were made of papier-mâché. Fruit and bagel stands stood abandoned on empty sidewalks, the apples and bananas sitting in undisturbed rows, coated with a layer of pulverized concrete half an inch thick.

For someone raised in peaceful and prosperous America, Ground Zero itself was simply astonishing to behold. In the center, a crater 60 feet deep and 120 feet across. On each side, the mangled remains of the towers themselves. They say that each floor of each massive 110-story building was an acre in size. Spread before me was 220 acres of pure destruction crammed into a 16-acre plaza.

Stringy steel rods cut like irregular staircase steps—the skeleton of the building facade—surrounded two six-story piles of debris. Twisted red steel. Windows. Carpets. Toilets. Bits of copy machines, computers, file cabinets, desks. And of course, hidden somewhere within the mountainous piles, the mutilated remains of over five thousand human beings. And then there was the noxious smoke, streaming from a thousand cracks and fissures in the piles from hundreds of hidden fires beneath them. It was a smoldering mound of hell on earth.

No one seemed to be in charge. Hundreds of firefighters crawled around on the piles in small groups. Several pockets of twenty or thirty of them labored with torches, shovels, wire cutters, jackhammers, electric saws, oxygen canisters, hoses, dogs, and their bare hands. At the fringe of the pile—near the Brooks Brothers store that had been transformed into a makeshift morgue—stood several long lines of emergency workers who handed off buckets of debris, one by one. Spontaneous order emerged from the chaos.

So, for example, a New York City fire captain in the pit who needed forty welding tips phoned a friend in New Jersey who has a boat. His friend calls the local union, and in an hour a couple boxes of welding tips are loaded onto a ship, along with several boxes of food, clothes, medical supplies, and fifteen guys looking to lend a hand. An hour later the captain docks the boat at the Cove, east of the American Express building directly adjacent to the site. Ten minutes later, a motley group of construction workers, police officers, volunteers, FBI agents, and National Guardsmen arrive to unload the boxes and pass them down a 150-man work line. Linda and Jackie, two nurses, organize the unloading at the end of the supply line: "Medical supplies, here! Clothes, there! Construction supplies, here!" The captain radios that the welding tips are off the boat. Twenty minutes later, a retired veteran named Rich makes his way into the makeshift supply store on the second floor of the AMEX building, finds the welding tips, and hauls them in a golf cart across the plaza to an equally makeshift transfer station. Half an hour later, the captain who "ordered" the welding tips from his friend in New Jersey not more than two hours ago walks over to pick up his supplies.

Much of my time was spent directing materials around the site. The supply triangle between the dock, the AMEX building, and the piles ran nonstop for several days and nights. In the days following September 11, similar operations were repeated throughout lower Manhattan, as thousands of people spontaneously found and contributed to the supply chain.

There was much goodness and bravery at the site, but there was also fear, as frayed nerves frequently conspired to induce instantaneous panic. When something shifted unexpectedly on one of the piles, for instance, a firefighter would run, sending the team around him leaping from the huge mound, thereby inspiring hundreds of workers in that quadrant of Ground Zero to scatter. Within seconds several hundred workers would be "running for their lives" down the nearest street, tossing their tools, kicking up dust behind them, tripping over live fire hoses.

Then, as people began to realize that it had been a false alarm, the explanations would begin. "The Millennium Building was gonna come down." "I smelled natural gas." "There was a fire on the pile." After twenty minutes or so, people would slowly creep back toward the site. This cycle repeated itself several times

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in the first few days, until a system of bells and bullhorns replaced leaping bodies as the official evacuation call.

I would never have predicted it beforehand, but one of the most helpful and generous groups on site were the Scientologists, who, as I learned, take great pride in being the first to respond to the scene of disasters and crises. When you state your need to a member of the Church of Scientology, the entire group enters what they call the "cycle of action." Anyone who answers a request must do everything in his power to satisfy it and return directly to the person who issued the request to report the results. Ask a Scientologist for a respirator, for example, and your request immediately echoes out from your location in concentric circles. "You need a respirator?" "Respirator!" "We need a respirator up here!" "OK, who's got the respirators?" "Bring out the respirators!" It was extremely efficient, if also slightly comic.

The Scientologists were not always so helpful, however. They also provided what they called an "assist"—an odd procedure during which a worker runs his hands over your arms and legs in order to "center your energy." It didn't so much resemble a massage as a child petting a small dog before he has acquired complete motor coordination.

At a time when so many people seemed to be at their best, it was sad, although hardly surprising, to learn that a few took advantage of the breakdown of law and order in the vicinity of Ground Zero. Some of the looters did their damage in the shadows, late at night, while others were bolder, dressing up as construction or utility workers. They pilfered through the AMEX supply area, filling up bags and buckets with donated jeans, shoes, sweatshirts, socks, and underwear. They made their way into people's homes and businesses, taking advantage of the mass evacuations in lower Manhattan to take what they wished.

One day an off-duty officer from the Department of Justice took me on a golf cart tour of the businesses that had been looted shortly after being boarded up by the authorities. He was particularly incensed that a nearby National Guardsman had been so ineffective in preventing the damage. Moreover, a number of apartments in Battery Park City—the high-rise residential buildings that abut the Trade Center—had been broken into, and a number of supplies down at the dock had been stolen, both while supposedly under watch by the National Guard officers. A few days later, the military police and the NYPD stepped in to clamp down on the crime.

President Bush arrived at Ground Zero on Friday, September 14—the first day in my twenty-four years of living that I experienced genuine patriotism. When word got out that the President might pay us a visit, eyebrows lifted and smiles cracked on faces. Twenty minutes before he arrived, the NYPD cleared the area at the northern edge of the site, and several work crews that had been on their way to work began to congregate around the area where Bush would arrive. As soon as he stepped out of his black Suburban, the workers dropped their shovels and scurried around to welcome him. Many of us stood on overturned buckets behind a few rows of people to catch a glimpse, and those behind us stood on two or three buckets. Scores of guys climbed on top of the trucks, cranes, and emergency vehicles in the area to watch and listen. Some just climbed higher on the rubble, or stood on an overturned I-beam to catch a glimpse.

I thought to myself that this scene must be reminiscent of some bygone time in America's political history when a White House staff did not plan every presidential visit weeks in advance. I thought of Lincoln at Gettysburg, stepping out of a train to make a speech, and spontaneous crowds of people, some climbing into trees or on walls, gathering around to watch and listen. Here was our Commander-in-Chief, faced with unprecedented destruction on American soil, to rally men in hard hats at the center of a wounded city, at the center of a stunned nation.

As he passed in front of our section, his hand met mine, and he looked me in the eye for more than a moment to hear me stammer what I believe was something like, "God bless, Mr. President, we're behind you." He was in no hurry to speak to us as a group, but rather took his time meeting us individually. The crowd around the rubble was growing fast, reaching at least 1,000. There was clearly an enthusiasm in the air for the first time since September 11.

When the President finally grabbed a bullhorn and began to speak, it was hard to hear him at first. When someone in the crowd shouted, "We can't hear you!" the President proclaimed loudly, "But I can hear you! And the rest of the country hears you! And soon, the people who did this . . . are going to hear from all of us!" At that moment, a shot of electricity surged through the crowd. Cheers erupted and echoed off the surrounding buildings, each draped with a tattered American flag. "U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!" It went on and on.

Then—at the corner of West and Vesey streets in New York City, on the edge of a mass grave, at the feet

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of the Commander-in-Chief of the world's mightiest nation—I was overwhelmed with an unexpected sense of fraternity and love of country. Not fifty feet away lay the remains of five thousand innocent people, and here, at their side, a band of their brothers stood before their leader, united in an unconditional love of justice. I really do think that is what it was.

One night at 2 A.M. I was on my way through the rain to pick up supplies in the AMEX building, which, among other things, was being used as a transfer station for the bodies and parts of bodies we had recovered from the site. From there, they were packed onto trucks to be taken to the morgue at Bellevue Hospital. As I entered the atrium of the building I saw scores of workers holding their hard hats over their chests. Fifty yards away a dozen firefighters proceeded slowly in my direction carrying a body bag. I removed my hard hat and stepped to the side. As they approached, I could read their red, swollen eyes. Their uniforms were dark with mud and soot. Raindrops dripped from everyone's gear. A priest wearing a raincoat, a hard hat, goggles, a respirator, and a headlamp came forward with a book and oils. The men carrying their fallen friend cried quietly as the priest rolled back the bag and anointed the body, administering Last Rites. In the atrium, heads bowed and no one moved. I don't remember how long we stood there, but time seemed to stop as profane space became as sacred as a shrine. Eventually, the priest stepped away, and the firemen walked slowly forward, out the doors and into the truck waiting outside. Without a word, we went back out into the dark rain to work.

Before the rainstorm, nearly everything at Ground Zero was covered with a layer of dust, which became the parchment for the messages of rescue workers. On windows or walls, you could find short compositions: "God Bless America," "Engine company 6," "Give us Justice," "Revenge is a bitch," "We miss you Johnny," and the like. But one message stood out. Written with a black marker on a flier posted on a pillar of the AMEX building, "RIP Fr. Mike." Father Mike Judge, a Franciscan priest and Chaplain of the FDNY, died when he was struck by a falling body on September 11 as he administered Last Rites to a deceased firefighter. In the days since September 11, working around the clock with little-to-no rest, I lost track of time. But this message reminded me that it was Sunday.

Sunday was my fifth day working at Ground Zero. I was exhausted. After making my rounds at the supply area, I walked up North End Avenue to the support center at Stuyvesant High School. I had heard earlier in the day that St. Patrick's Cathedral was going to hold a 5:30 Mass, and I felt the need to attend it. As I entered the building, I saw a man dressed in a white habit walking slowly but deliberately down the hall. The tip of his Roman collar peaked out of the robe. He looked and spoke like James Earl Jones and his face was very serious. It occurred to me later that he was probably a Franciscan and had likely just come from attending to the dead at Ground Zero.

All around us, the Scientologists and volunteers buzzed back and forth, and police officers and workers passed by. I asked the priest whether there would be an evening Mass around the site, and he told me that the only one had been held at 9:00 that morning. I told him that I was hoping to attend the memorial Mass at St. Patrick's, which I instantly realized had started six minutes earlier. He then said very deliberately, "I can offer you the Holy Eucharist. Would you like that?" And then, with five days of chaos in my head and fatigue consuming my body, a nameless priest in a white robe, almost invisible in the white hallway were it not for his dark complexion, put his hand on my head, said a blessing, and placed the Body of Christ in my mouth. My eyes remained closed for a long time.

Here, amid the nonstop movement and clutter of bodies and buildings, amid the constant acrid smell of smoke and smog, amid the signs reading "Warning, high levels of asbestos here!", amid the dozens of workers who seemed always on the verge of breaking down in tears, amid the steady flow of sobbing civilians who toured the place where their loved one lay entombed, amid the constant sounds of machines, crashing metal, and sirens, amid all of the destruction and death—here was a pocket of peace. Here, Christ was present, not only among us, but now, again, inside me. And then this angel in the whirlwind sent me on my way and resumed his slow but deliberate walk through the horror, looking to dispense solace to any and all who would accept it, passing through the tumult, almost as though he were from another world. FT

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What Violence Is For

J. Bottum

On Sunday, October 7, as the United States began at last its air strikes against the Taliban, I was on an airplane, more than twenty thousand feet above the Midwestern plains—that height from which the square-edged farms and checkerboarded fields seem not quite real: a toy land, a counterpane spread across a giant's bed, a fantasy.

It was a day that one wanted to be filled with portent and meaningful coincidence. One wanted signs to mark the moment as grief's counterweight: the answer, the justice for the fallen towers and the thousands dead, their ashes mingled with the dust that silts across Manhattan. But all the signs that I could see were unbearably small and sad. The technicians for the luggage X-ray machine squabbling with the porters underneath a poster that read, "United Airlines remembers the victims of September 11." The stewardesses wearing bits of red, white, and blue ribbon twisted in that little loop which has been asked to fill too many purposes in the decade since it was invented by AIDS activists. The dry chicken served on the flight with a metal fork, a metal spoon, and a plastic knife, all crowded on the tray-table beside a folded cardboard note that explained why metal butter knives are banned. We are very bad at symbols these days—and that leaves us at enormous risk, for we are faced by enemies for whom symbols remain hard and living things.

When the pilot announced over the intercom that the President was speaking, the passengers all put on their headphones and listened to the President's declaration that military action against Afghanistan had begun. The speech seemed good, as good as present political oratory allows. After a disappointing performance on September 11, President Bush has gotten better with each delivery: at the National Cathedral, at the joint session of Congress, from the White House treaty room. He spoke of the limited nature of the air attacks, their justice, and their necessity. He said America will neither falter nor fail, and he warned of more to come.

While I listened, I stared down at the well-ordered landscape beneath me, much of it splashed with irrational, irregular Rorschach blots of dark trees spreading along the windbreaks and the creek bottoms. Before I left, I had done an electronic search of American newspapers and found more than five hundred editorials and op-eds that used the word "senseless" the day after the hijacked airlines smashed into the Pentagon and World Trade Center. To sit for hours in front of the television, as nearly everyone in America did on September 11, was to hear the same thought, over and over: senseless, meaningless, unintelligible. As the fields rolled by underneath the plane, the stands of trees began to look like stains of blood, splatters on a neatly ruled and tidy map. There has been something slightly off-center, something eccentric and askew, about much of the response to September 11. It is difficult to pin down precisely: a rhetoric somehow simultaneously too high and not high enough, a feeling simultaneously of unreality and too much reality. You can catch a hint of it in both the name initially chosen for the Afghan campaign, "Operation Infinite Justice," and in the fact that the name was quickly abandoned in embarrassment. The neatly ruled and tidy categories of modern thought cannot comprehend the archaic principle that made the destruction of the World Trade Center not meaningless but meaningful for its perpetrators.

A people like us—a people who have convinced ourselves that myth never actually works—cannot understand when real myth rises up in the world again in all its violent, sacrificial, monstrous, and satanic glory. With six thousand dead on September 11, we know beyond doubt what blood is. But we have forgotten what

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blood *means*. The crowds in the streets of Cairo, the marchers in Islamabad, the Palestinians who ululated and fired off their guns to celebrate the slaughter of Americans: they still grasp what blood does and why a mythic culture needs violence for its foundation. Until we remember again what they have not forgotten, we will not be able to respond—with the right infinite justice, or the right finite justice, or even the right mercy. We will keep getting it wrong.

There is a more theological way to put this—a way suggested by the work of the French literary critic turned American theologian, René Girard, whose latest book, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, is as clear and systematic a primer to his thought as he has yet produced.

Girard began in the early 1960s, with such works as *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel*, by explaining how triangular relations form among characters in fiction. From there, he turned to anthropology, holding in *Violence and the Sacred* that the myths of ancient cultures invariably show themselves to be based on sacrificial violence against a scapegoat. He connected these themes with a psychological argument that desire is essentially "mimetic": an anti-Freudian declaration that we learn what it is we want by watching what others want. And finally, in such works as *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World*, Girard put at the center of his thought the Cross, the sacrifice that breaks the cycle of violence, sacrifice, and mimetic desire. Perhaps most overwhelming in *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning* is Girard's attack on what he once called "the inability of the greatest minds in the modern world to grasp the difference between the Christian crib at Christmastime and the bestial monstrosities of mythological births." Often in the Old Testament and overwhelmingly in the New, mythology—the mechanics of scapegoat sacrifice—is penetrated. Girard is entirely serious when he seeks an anthropology of religion, but he means the opposite of the typical anthropologist's attempt to reduce Judeo-Christian revelation to a general category of "sacred religion." Judaism and Christianity are, he holds, fundamentally anti-sacred—anti-mythical—in their partisanship for the victim.

I find all of this Girardianism by turns helpful and unhelpful. But, in thinking about the reaction to the horrors of September 11, something does come clear. We have lived so long with the Christian alternative to the sacrificial logic by which mythic cultures are founded that we've fallen into two massive and dangerous self-deceptions.

The first involves the often inchoate belief that we can maintain the Christian alternative without explicit Christianity—or even, in its most virulent form, that Christianity is an oppressive force that actively prevents the realization of this alternative (which is, of course, no longer recognized as Christian).

And the second involves forgetting that the Christian alternative is actually an *alternative to* something. We practice a kind of historical make-nice in which we politely disbelieve that violent myths of the founding of culture might do exactly what they say they do, an unwillingness to admit that there exist cultures which genuinely *require* for their continued existence the blood of sacrificial victims to be mixed with the mortar of their buildings.

You can see the first delusion playing out farcically when a deputy chancellor for New York's schools tells the *Washington Post*: "Those people who said we don't need multiculturalism, that it's too touchy-feely, a pox on them. I think they've learned their lesson. We have to do more to teach habits of tolerance, knowledge, and awareness of other cultures." You can see it more significantly in the unwillingness of America's public officials, pundits, and popular figures to say anything that might suggest Islam isn't, well, entirely *Christian* in its love for peace and rejection of jihad. The relation of Osama bin Laden to Islamic theology and statecraft is complicated, of course, but there was, I suggest, more speculation in the American press about the tie between the militia movement and fundamentalist Christianity at the time of the Oklahoma City bombing than there is today about the connections between al-Qaeda and Islam. At its most virulent, this line naturally ends in something like the financial writer Andrew Tobias, who recently used his column to assert the identity of evangelical Christians and the Taliban—both standing in sharp contrast to peaceful Islam.

But bad as all that is, the second delusion is the more dangerous. Christianity never said that violence is senseless. It said that violence is wrong. The notion that violence has no meaning creates as its first by-product a soft pacifism—the illusion of the comfortable classes, as Reinhold Niebuhr once called it—that wants both to be safe and to refrain from sullying its hands with coercive force. There is, of course, a tradition of hard Christian pacifism that is morally serious and intellectually coherent. But when, for example, Alice Walker, author of *The Color Purple*, writes in the *Village Voice* that we should give bin Laden a lecture on love—"What would happen to his cool armor if he could be reminded of all the good, nonviolent things he has done?"—we have passed from hard Christian pacifism into the gooey swamps of comic feel-goodism.

Similarly, when Tony Kushner expounds in the *New York Times Magazine* about the co-feeling of victimhood, he becomes a parody of the thing he fondly imagines he has transcended: "People who have suffered oppression can recognize oppression when it appears in very different context. . . . My impression is that New Yorkers are a lot less hawkish as a city now than we were during

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the Gulf War, when we had no legitimate complaint and there was a frightening feeling of the city all falling in lock step behind the first Bush. Now we have suffered terribly, and we seem to be responding with far less eagerness for war. And, of course, one of the reasons is that now we know what collateral damage, as the Pentagon calls it, looks like up close. No one has had to see people fall from a 110-story building before—that's a particular horror that has been reserved for us. But it's entirely to our credit that we are learning something from it."

But something even worse overtakes those who have forgotten what violence was originally—originally, in the sense of the Fall, of the satanic order—designed to do. In and out of the pages of the *Nation*, Noam Chomsky and Christopher Hitchens have been feuding ever since September 11. Observing that the attack on the World Trade Center was the first assault against the American mainland since 1812, Chomsky declared that between 1812 and 2001, the United States "annihilated the indigenous population (millions of people), conquered half of Mexico, intervened violently in the surrounding region, conquered Hawaii and the Philippines (killing hundreds of thousands of Filipinos), and, in the past half century particularly, extended its resort to force throughout much of the world. The number of victims is colossal. For the first time, the guns have been directed the other way."

Confronting this parade of comparative victimology and moral equivalence, Christopher Hitchens has been marvelously sharp-tongued at denouncing Chomsky's ethical idiocy. And yet, identifying the Taliban as "religio-fascists," Hitchens reveals that he too does not know what the attackers and those who sent them thought to gain from their attacks. For both Chomsky and Hitchens, the only categories that exist for understanding are the categories of contemporary political discourse—which leaves utterly unexplained both the blood spilled and the essential wrongness of its spilling.

You can see the real danger perhaps most clearly when the Indian novelist Arundhati Roy, universally admired author of *The God of Small Things*, writes in the *Manchester Guardian* that Osama bin Laden "is nothing more than the American President's dark doppelgänger. The savage twin of all that purports to be beautiful and civilized. He has been sculpted from the spare rib of a world laid to waste by America's foreign policy: its gunboat diplomacy, its nuclear arsenal, its vulgarly stated policy of 'full-spectrum dominance,' its chilling disregard for non-American lives, its barbarous military interventions, its support for despotic and dictatorial regimes, its merciless economic agenda that has munched through the economies of poor countries like a cloud of locusts. Its marauding multinationals who are taking over the air we breathe, the ground we stand on, the water we drink, the thoughts we think."

This isn't just a claim of moral equivalence born from a hatred for the United States. Neither is it just an obscene parody in which the concern for victims is transformed into a competition of victimhood. It is not a coincidence that (as Girard points out in *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*) innumerable pagan myths of cultural foundings—from Romulus and Remus on—speak of twins, one of whom must be sacrificed in order to build the new city. Reaching through the haze of post-Christian understanding, employing against itself the only moral language she knows—the Judeo-Christian language of victims—Arundhati Roy alights by chance on a solution. And that solution turns out to be the ancient, satanic, sacrificial one: the solution of violence to which Christ offered the alternative.

For Girard, the problem of forming a culture—of preventing and containing the spiraling disaster of internecine murder and cultural collapse—is like a quadratic equation with two solutions, a positive one and a negative one. We have lived so long with the Christian attempt to understand and instantiate Christ's positive solution that we have forgotten there was, and is, another solution. Violence actually can drive out violence—Satan actually can drive out Satan, to use Girard's formulation—by aiming all the escalating and random violence of a culture at a single enemy and victim, a scapegoat for all that ails it. And people like Arundhati Roy—and Noam Chomsky, and Christopher Hitchens, and even all the soft pacifists who babble about the senselessness of violence—end up facilitating and recreating the conditions for the rebirth in the world of the old, forgotten logic of sacrifice, scapegoats, and slaughter.

Hard Christian pacifism is perhaps an answer for some (for the pacifistic Stanley Hauerwas, for instance, who, in something of an irony, was named "America's best theologian" by *Time* magazine only two days before the events of September 11 massively raised the stakes of American pacifism). But for the rest of us, and for the Bush Administration in particular, the answer must involve the proper use of force to stop the cycle of violence—force and violence being by no means the same thing—from becoming established. There is a task far more important even than capturing Osama bin Laden or destroying the Taliban regime that harbors him. And that task is to prevent—by war, aid, diplomacy, and example—a new culture from being founded on the mythological value of the blood of six thousand dead American scapegoats. We must not allow the return of that ancient logic, that satanic solution, that other scapegoating answer to the question of what violence is for. FT

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Three Recent Books

"The Poor Man's Guide to Homicide,"
By Henry Mullins (illustrated),
Describes a hundred fifty
Simple, thrifty
Ways that have been fully tested.
All are annotated
And guaranteed
To succeed.
(Purchase price rebated
If reader is dissatisfied
Or gets arrested.)

"Travel's Liabilities,"
By Jonathan T. Conger,
Is sure to please
The stay-at-home
Who used to roam
But can't afford to any longer
Or is disabled by disease.
Conger terms the risks and costs distressing
And spells out scores of harsh complaints
That cover every phase
Of journeys nowadays.
In short, the picture that he paints
Of travel is depressing
And, for anyone who can't go touring,
Reassuring.

"Smile Away Your Cancer,"
By Margaret Taylor-Waite,
Gives a layman's straight,
Inspiring answer
To the scourge of humankind,
Explaining how you can survive,
Gain peace of mind,
And even thrive
If you're attacked
By it.
It's packed
With wit,
Advice, and adages.
She says,
"All pains in time abate"
And "Keep your spirits high."
Recommended by a slew
Of readers, few
Of whom are still alive.

William Walden

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Religious Freedom: Innovation and Development

Avery Cardinal Dulles

According to John Henry Newman, whose two hundredth birthday we celebrated in February 2001, Christianity came into the world as a single idea, but time was necessary for believers to perceive its multiple aspects and spell out their meaning. The Christian idea has gradually taken possession of minds and hearts so that its significance is more precisely grasped as the centuries pass. For this reason the doctrine of the faith undergoes a process of development through time. The Second Vatican Council, endorsing the insights of Newman, devoted an important paragraph of its Constitution on Divine Revelation to the Church's growth in understanding the tradition handed down from the apostles.

One of the most striking developments in twentieth-century Catholicism was the doctrine of religious freedom set forth by the Second Vatican Council. The Declaration on Religious Freedom, known by its Latin title *Dignitatis Humanae* (*DH*), took up two very sensitive questions, the one dealing with the right of individual persons and groups to religious freedom; the other, with the duties of the State toward religion. Regarding the first point, the Council taught that all human persons have by nature an inalienable right to be free in seeking religious truth, in living and worshiping according to their religious convictions, and in bearing witness to their beliefs without hindrance from any human power. This principle was theologically grounded in the fact that God, respecting the dignity of the human person, invites a voluntary and uncoerced adherence to religious truth. The act of faith, being free by its very nature, cannot be compelled.

Regarding the second point, the Council taught that the State has an obligation to protect the inviolable rights of all citizens, including the right of religious freedom. It did not teach that the State was obliged to give legal privileges to Christianity or Catholicism, although it did not rule out such arrangements. It did deny that civil government had the authority to command or prohibit religious acts.

If *DH* is compared with earlier official Catholic teaching, it represents an undeniable, even a dramatic, change. The question must therefore be asked: Was the Declaration a homogeneous development within the Catholic tradition, or was it a repudiation of previous Church doctrine?

The question is of some importance. At the Council itself some conservative bishops, Marcel Lefebvre most notably, held that *DH* was contrary to established Catholic teaching and could not be adopted without violence to the Catholic faith. When, notwithstanding his protests, the Declaration was approved by an overwhelming majority of the Council Fathers (2,308 to 70), Lefebvre founded a traditionalist movement that ended in schism from Rome.

The case for reversal is defended at the other end of the spectrum by theological revisionists who applaud *DH*. Vatican II's repudiation of earlier Catholic teaching on religious freedom, they argue, makes it likely that other Catholic doctrines, such as that of Paul VI on contraception, may someday be overturned.

Thus Archbishop Lefebvre and the revisionists, for very different reasons, agreed that *DH* was a reversal of earlier Catholic teaching. Their thesis, however, receives no support from the document itself, which

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declares explicitly that it "leaves intact the traditional Catholic teaching on the moral obligation of individuals and societies toward the true religion and the one Church of Christ." It also claims to be speaking in harmony with the tradition and doctrine of the Church and to be developing the doctrine of recent popes on the inviolable rights of the human person and on the constitutional order of society.

During the Council, Bishop Émile De Smedt of Bruges, as the official spokesman (*relator*) for the commission that composed the document, defended its compatibility with earlier Catholic teaching. A series of other cardinals and bishops, including Archbishop Gabriel-Marie Garrone of Toulouse and Archbishop Lawrence Shehan of Baltimore, spoke in support of De Smedt's position. During and after the Council theologians such as Roger Aubert and John Courtney Murray, followed by a host of others, defended the Council's claim that *DH* is a harmonious adaptation, not a correction, of previous Catholic teaching. In Murray's words, *DH* represented "an authentic development of doctrine in the sense of Vincent of Lérins, 'an authentic progress, not a change, of the faith.'"

As Newman himself intimated, doctrine of a social or political character does not follow exactly the same course of development as pure dogma. It is not simply spun out of the original deposit of faith, but emerges with a certain irregularity according to the vicissitudes of history. Pope John Paul II explains that the social teaching of the Magisterium is under continual revision insofar as the unchanging principles of the gospel need to be upheld in varying social situations. The fundamental principles are constant, but the judgments and adaptations are ever new. A measure of discontinuity may therefore be expected in successive responses to novel situations. Such discontinuity, however, does not require reversals unless the Church at an earlier time ruled out precisely the development that was to occur under changed circumstances.

The component of discontinuity or innovation may easily be seen by studying the teaching of the popes of the nineteenth century, who addressed the topic of religious freedom in a social, cultural, and political context very different from our own. Gregory XVI (1831-1846) and Pius IX (1846-1878), for example, were speaking within the relatively narrow horizon of Catholic Europe and Latin America, where traditional religion was under attack from militant secularist liberalism represented by the Jacobinism of the French Revolution and the Italian laicism typified by Count Cavour. Gregory XVI in his encyclical *Mirari Vos* (1832) condemned the extreme liberalism of Félicité de Lamennais, which would allow all kinds of unfounded, libelous, and subversive opinions to be circulated without any legal restrictions. In this context he characterized as "insanity" (*deliramentum*) the view "according to which freedom of conscience must be asserted and vindicated for everyone whatsoever." Pius IX in his encyclical *Quanta Cura* (1864) repeated this condemnation.

The Syllabus of Errors is a favorite source for those who wish to demonstrate an about-face of Catholic teaching on freedom of religion and on Church-State relationships. It was not a part of the encyclical *Quanta Cura* but an unsigned appendix to it containing a catalogue of previously condemned errors. According to Newman the Syllabus has no more doctrinal authority in itself than an index or table of contents taken apart from the book to which it refers. While Newman may have minimized the authority, he was right at least to the extent that the propositions must be interpreted in relation to the original documents from which they are excerpted.

Some of the propositions of the Syllabus of Errors, taken at face value, do sound contrary to Vatican II. Regarding personal conscience, Proposition 15 rejects the view that "each individual is free to embrace and profess the religion that he judges true by the light of reason." *DH*, however, teaches that "every man has the duty, and therefore the right, to seek truth in matters of religion, in order that he may with prudence form for himself right and true judgments of conscience, with the use of suitable means."

Was the Syllabus, then, condemning what would later be approved by Vatican II? Before answering we must inquire what Pius IX meant by the freedom of the individual to follow the light of reason. Proposition 3 of the Syllabus gives the needed clue. It denies that "human reason, without any relation at all to God, is the sole judge of true and false, good and evil, is a law unto itself, and is sufficient by its natural powers to procure the welfare of individuals and peoples." *DH*, in harmony with the Syllabus, states that "the highest norm for human life is the divine law—eternal, objective, and universal—whereby God orders, directs, and governs the entire universe." In a later paragraph *DH* declares that the Church is, by the will of Christ, the teacher of truth and that all men and women are invited, according to the measure of grace given to them, to accept and profess the faith. Vatican II, therefore, is far from teaching that unaided human reason, without reference to God, is the supreme criterion of truth.

Several propositions from the Syllabus speak of Church-State relationships in ways that seem problematic today. Proposition 55 condemns the view that "the Church must be separated from the State, and the State from the Church." But this proposition is taken from Pius IX's allocution *Acerbissimum Vobiscum* of 1852 dealing with the persecution of the Church in New Granada

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(modern Colombia). At that time and place the State, under pretext of separating itself from the Church, imposed a ruthless secularization, denying all public recognition and legal rights to religious organizations. It confiscated all seminaries, reduced marriage to a purely civil contract, suppressed religious schools, and claimed the right to appoint all bishops and pastors. Quite obviously *DH* does not accept that so-called "separation," which really amounts to the State's control of the entire social order. *DH*, in fact, sets forth a long list of freedoms that the Catholic Church claims for herself. At no point, moreover, does it use the ambiguous expression, "separation of Church and State."

Proposition 77 of the Syllabus rejects the view that "in our age it is no longer suitable for the Catholic religion to be considered the sole religion of the State, excluding all other religions." This statement does not imply that the Catholic Church should always and everywhere be the religion of the State. It simply asserts that in the mid-nineteenth century the acceptance of Catholicism as the sole established religion could in some places be suitable—a position that Vatican II does not deny. The Council allows that even today it may be desirable in some places for the State to give special recognition to one religion, but it adds that if this is done "the right of all citizens and religious communities to religious freedom must at the same time be recognized and upheld."

Pius IX's immediate successor, Leo XIII (1878-1903), set forth the Catholic teaching on freedom in an important encyclical, *Libertas Praestantissimum* (1888). True freedom, he maintained, is a capacity to do not only what we wish but what we ought. The so-called "modern freedoms" of worship, speech, and conscience, he warned, could become destructive unless carefully defined. Liberty of worship might be taken to mean a moral entitlement to choose any religion or none according to one's fancy. Liberty of speech could be interpreted as a right to make groundless, deceptive, or slanderous statements. Liberty of conscience could seem to imply a license to disobey God and persons who speak with divine authority. Leo's condemnation of false freedoms, even though it targeted errors prevalent a century ago, retains its validity and relevance today.

DH went beyond Leo XIII in affirming that people in error have certain human rights. In particular, they have the right not to be interfered with by the State in acting according to their religious convictions, unless in so doing they disturb what the Council calls the "just public order." A significant number of bishops expressed anxiety that *DH* would affirm the right to hold or disseminate error, thereby reversing the previous teaching of many popes. In his final *relatio* of November 19, 1965, Bishop De Smedt sought to quiet these fears. He sharply denied that the text he was presenting affirmed any right to error. Confirming De Smedt's position, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* asserts: "The right to religious liberty is neither a moral license to adhere to error, nor a supposed right to error, but rather a natural right of the human person to civil liberty, i.e., immunity, within just limits, from external constraint in religious matters by political authorities" (2108).

Regarding the relations of Church and State, Leo XIII maintained that while the two have different functions, they must act in harmony. In his 1885 encyclical *Immortale Dei*, for instance, he teaches that society as such, and the government through which it acts, have a duty to recognize and support the true religion. Rulers as well as subjects "are bound absolutely to worship God in that way which He has shown to be His will." Later Leo states that "it is not lawful for the State, any more than for the individual, either to disregard all religious duties or to hold in equal favor all kinds of religion." In most of his social teaching he presupposes a regime in which the civil government exercises quasi-paternal authority in caring for the religious well-being of the citizens.

DH is more reserved in describing the religious responsibilities of the State. It teaches that on the negative side, the State must avoid all coercion, unless religious freedom is being misused to violate the rights of other citizens, to disturb the public peace, or to undermine public morality—three provisos that the Council groups under the rather nebulous heading of "public order." Positively, according to the Declaration, the State must "recognize and promote the religious life of its citizens," for it is clear, according to *DH*, that "society will itself benefit from the fruits of justice and peace that result from people's fidelity to God and His holy will."

These religious responsibilities are in line with what Leo XIII designated as the "care of religion." Vatican II did not adopt the liberal concept of the religiously or morally neutral State—one that concerns itself only with civil peace and material prosperity. Many bishops at Vatican II feared that the Council would deny the duty of the civil government toward the one true religion as affirmed by a whole series of popes. *DH* stated explicitly that the one true religion subsists in the Catholic Church and that it accepted "the traditional Catholic teaching on the moral obligation of individuals and societies toward the true religion and toward the one Church of Christ." The question was raised whether this meant that the obligation rested on the citizens, as distinct from the State. On this issue, as on the supposed right to profess error, Bishop De Smedt in his final *relatio* gave a decisive answer. He explained that the text, as revised, did not overlook or deny but clearly recalled Leo XIII's teaching on the duties of the public authority (*potestatis publicae*) toward the true religion.

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These words may be taken as an official commentary on the text—indeed, the only official commentary we have on this particular point. We may therefore conclude that *DH* does not negate earlier Catholic teaching on the duties of the State toward the true faith.

Speaking to a worldwide community in a period of rapid flux, Vatican II wisely refrained from trying to specify exactly what kind of help the Church ought to expect from the State. That question must be variously answered according to the constitution of the State, the religious makeup of the population, and the traditions of the society. No one formula could be suitable for all countries today, though any legitimate arrangement must, as I have already said, respect the rights of all citizens.

The main difference between the doctrine of the nineteenth-century popes and that of *DH* is in the means that each envisages. Pius IX and Leo XIII, writing in an age when paternalistic monarchies were still normal in most Catholic countries, evidently preferred to see the Catholic Church in a legally privileged position. Vatican II, speaking within a more democratic and religiously pluralistic situation, placed greater reliance on indirect support. If the State would simply establish conditions under which the Church could carry on its mission unimpeded, it would do more for the Church than many Christian princes had done in the past. On the final day of the Council, December 8, 1965, Pope Paul VI addressed to temporal rulers the question: "What does the Church ask of you today?" And he answered: "She tells you in one of the major documents of this Council. She asks of you only liberty, the liberty to believe and to preach her faith, the freedom to love her God and serve Him, the freedom to live and to bring to men her message of life."

For a correct interpretation of the shift between the nineteenth-century popes and Vatican II, it is necessary to take account of the intervening history. In the nineteenth century the principal threat to faith came from militant secular liberalism, inspired by the slogans of the French Revolution. In the twentieth century, Christian faith was confronted by oppressive atheistic regimes, such as Soviet Communism and German National Socialism. Beginning with Pius XI (1922-1939), the popes vigorously upheld the rights of the human person against totalitarian systems of government. Pius XII (1939-1958) in his wartime messages and John XXIII (1958-1963) in his social encyclicals became stalwart champions of universal human rights. *DH* could therefore claim that by amplifying the doctrine of religious freedom on the basis of the dignity of the human person it was developing the teaching of the more recent popes without contradicting previous Catholic tradition.

Besides the transformation of the political climate, a number of other factors contributed to the adjustments we have noted. Catholic theology in the nineteenth century was dominated by Scholastic ontological categories, but in the twentieth century it was profoundly influenced by personalist phenomenology, which brought with it a keener appreciation of human dignity and freedom. Then again, the twentieth century saw the rise of the ecumenical movement, which made the churches more ready to see one another as allies in a common struggle against secularism and irreligion. The Declaration on Religious Freedom, initially drafted by the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, was seen as a help for overcoming tensions among religious groups.

Even today, religious freedom may suitably be described as "a developing doctrine." The present participle conveys the idea that the development did not end with Vatican II. In the forty years since the Council the process has continued, especially by way of clarification and application. Pope John Paul II, who enthusiastically welcomed and promoted religious freedom at the Council, has been a leader in bringing its doctrine forward.

The present pope's first and most important contribution has been to set the teaching of *DH* in the framework of a comprehensive theory of human freedom based on classical theology and contemporary personalist insights. Using *DH* in combination with Vatican II's Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, he has insisted that freedom cannot adequately be defined in purely negative terms, as a mere immunity from coercion. More fundamentally, freedom is a power of self-determination whereby the human person actively tends toward, embraces, and adheres to what is perceived as true and good. In this process conscience is a valuable instrument, but is not the ultimate norm. It does not tell us what is right or wrong unless it is properly informed. Conscience itself therefore summons us to seek the true good and to make use of whatever authoritative guidance is available.

A second contribution of John Paul II is his move beyond individualism. A partial or hasty reading of *DH* might give the impression that its real concern is to protect the individual person from oppression by social authorities. The present pope has given greater attention to the right of religious groups, including the Church, to enjoy religious freedom. The religious needs of individuals, he points out, are not protected unless freedom is accorded to institutions that serve religion. Besides pressing this claim against Marxist governments in Eastern Europe, China, and Cuba, he has also made a powerful plea for the freedom of Christian churches to carry on their religious ministries in Islamic regions.

Building on the accomplishments of *DH*, John Paul II has, further, identified and repudiated an error that he calls "integralism"—namely the confusion between what

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belongs to Caesar and what belongs only to God. Religious integralism, as he defines it, fails to distinguish between the spheres of competence of faith and civil life. Integralists have sometimes excluded from the civil community all who do not profess the established religion. This was notably the case when the axiom "*Cuius regio eius religio*" ("The religion of the people is that of their ruler") was in place. With an apparent reference to some non-European countries, the Pope noted that this confusion of competences still obtains in certain parts of the world.

Moving beyond Vatican II, John Paul II has gone on to recognize the necessity of repentance for the errors of the past. Especially at the time of the Reformation, Protestant and Catholic rulers often cruelly exiled, imprisoned, or executed those of their subjects who did not adhere to the religion favored by the State. Christians of many different ecclesial traditions have frequently persecuted Jews, Gypsies, and other minorities. Vatican II was aware of this violence, but *DH* touched on it very lightly in a subordinate clause, as though it were a minor and rare aberration. John Paul II, in the name of all Catholics, asks forgiveness for the wrongs inflicted by their predecessors, and at the same time pledges the Church's forgiveness for all that Catholics have suffered in persecutions directed against them. This plea for mutual forgiveness was a key element in the program for the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000.

Finally, Pope John Paul II has elucidated the difference between mere tolerance and reconciliation. In the civil sphere, it may be necessary to tolerate certain unacceptable practices because the effort to suppress them would bring about greater evils. But mere tolerance is static; it cannot serve as a principle of growth. In interreligious dialogue and in ecumenism, therefore, efforts should be made to move toward unity in the fullness of truth. This endeavor is germane to the quest for freedom, since we have the promise of Jesus, "The truth will make you free" (John 8:32). To settle for doctrinal compromises or a simple agreement to disagree would be a disservice to freedom itself.

The problem of religious freedom is still a burning issue in the world of our day. In some regions atheistic governments are actively harassing or persecuting all religious believers. Elsewhere Christians and others are being oppressed by governments seeking to impose religious unity by force. The gospel of religious freedom still needs to be effectively proclaimed in various regions of Indonesia, India, the Near East, and Northern Africa. In the former Soviet Union the Orthodox Church is faced by quandaries not unlike those faced by Western European and Latin American Catholics on the eve of Vatican II.

In countries like the United States, the churches enjoy a blessed degree of freedom to carry out their mission. The greatest threat to religion, in my estimation, is the kind of secularism that would exclude religion from the public forum and treat churches as purely private institutions that have no rightful influence on legislation, public policy, and other dimensions of our common life. When churches speak out on issues such as abortion, euthanasia, marriage, and divorce, they are accused of transgressing the barrier between Church and State. Even the courts often interpret the non-establishment provision of the First Amendment so as to prevent any public role for religion, thereby inhibiting the free exercise of religion. Legal, fiscal, and regulatory pressures render it difficult for Catholic charitable and educational institutions to maintain their distinctive identity. In the name of free exercise, religious communities should have the means they need to act according to their principles and to transmit their faith to new generations. They are also entitled to argue for laws and public policies that are in conformity with what they regard as sound reason and the law of God.

While suitable public recognition should be given to the major religions within the body politic, the question of direct government assistance is much more complex. The difficulty is illustrated by divergent reactions of committed believers to President Bush's efforts to give public funding to faith-based initiatives of a social and charitable character. Some complain that if they do not receive State aid they will be inhibited in their free exercise of religion, while others fear that the embrace of governmental aid, with the regulation that would attend such aid, might suffocate the freedom that the churches now enjoy. These disagreements about matters of policy belong to the prudential, not the doctrinal, order. They can exist among persons who fully accept the current Catholic teaching on religious freedom.

Over the past fifty years we have seen a strong and welcome development of the doctrine of religious freedom. Articulating the principles of the gospel in new situations, the Church has found a new voice. She speaks with a fresh awareness of the dignity and freedom that God wills for all human beings and with a deeper realization of the limited competence of civil governments. As the Church adapts her social teaching to changing political and social circumstances, she comes to a sharper perception of certain aspects and consequences of the gospel. The teaching of the nineteenth-century popes was not erroneous, but was limited by the political and social horizons of the time. In the words of *DH*, Vatican II brought forth from the Church's treasury "new things in harmony with those that are old." This process of development must continue as the Church faces the new problems and opportunities that arise in successive generations.

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In Festo Nativitatis Ad Matrem Virginem Hymnus Eucharisticus

Gerard Manley Hopkins, S.J.

Mater Jesu mei,
Mater magni Dei,
Doce me de Eo,
De parvo dulci Deo.
Quantum amavisti
Quem tu concepisti,
Non concipiendum,
Dominum tremendum,
Sed in te contractum,
Verbum carnem factum?
Et contemnit idem
Ne cor meum quidem:
Meum cor indignum
Quod capiat tantum signum,
Indignum O quod gerat
Qui mane mecum erat,
Subit, O Maria,
In eücharistia.
Ipse vult intrare:
Nolo me negare.
Candens exemplare,
Doce me amare.
Dic ut plus ametur
Qualis videretur
Vulva dum lateret,
Necdum appareret,
Cum tua fecit laetam
Vox Elisabetham,
Laetam matre matrem,
Laetum fratre fratrem.
Doce me gaudere,
Rosa, tuo vere,
Virga, tuo flore,

A Eucharistic Hymn to the Virgin Mother on the Feast of the Nativity

Translated by Philip C. Fischer, S.J.

Mother of my Jesus,
Mother of God so great,
tell me of him,
of God so small and sweet.
How *much* did you love
the enfleshed Word,
the formidable Lord
pent up in you,
whom—inconceivable—
you conceived?
He does not disdain
even this heart of mine.
On my heart unworthy
of such an overture,
unworthy of his visit
who came at morn to me,
he drops in, O Mary,
Eucharistically.
It is *his* wish to enter,
I will not tell him no.
Shining paragon,
show me how to love.
That I may love him more,
tell me how it seemed when,
with him hid in your womb
and not ready to appear,
your voice rejoiced
Elizabeth,
made mother joyous in a mother
and brother joyous in a brother.
Stir in me gladness,
Rose, at your spring,
Sprig, at your flowering,

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Vellus, tuo rore,
Arca, tua lege,
Thronus, tuo rege,
Acies, tuo duce,
Luna, tua luce,
Stella, tuo sole,
Parens, tua prole.
Nam tumeo et abundo
Immundo adhuc mundo;
Sum contristatus Sanctum
Spiritum et planctum
Custodi feci meo
Cum exhiberem Deo
Laesum atque caesum
In mea carne Jesum.
  Demum quid sensisti
Ipsum cum vidisti
Tandem visu pleno
Parvulum in foeno,
Ecce tremebundum
Qui fixum firmat mundum
Et involutum pannos
Qui aeternos annos
Nondum natus de te
Volvebat in quiete?
Quae tu tum dicebas
Et quae audiebas?
Etsi fuit mutus
Tamen est locutus.
Da complecti Illum,
Mihi da pauxillum
Tuo ex amore
Et oscula ab ore.
Qui pro me vult dari,
Infans mihi fari,
Mecum conversari,
Tu da contemplari,
Mater magni Dei,
Mater Jesu mei.

Fleece, at your dew,
Ark, at your law,
Throne, at your king,
Phalanx, at your marshal,
Moon, at your whiteness,
Morning Star, at your brightness,
Parent, at your child.
For I am gravid and swirling
with worldliness still whirling awry.
I have grieved the Holy Ghost
and made my angel
guardian groan,
presenting to God,
with my sinful flesh,
Jesus lashed and gashed.
  What did you then feel
when at last you saw,
plain to see in the straw,
trembling and rolled up in rags,
the child who spins the world on its peg
and who, before you ever bore him,
unrolled in stillness
endless years before him?
What were the things
you said and, more,
what were the things
you listened for?
Although he spoke no word,
he *is* the Word you heard.
Let me hold him,
give me for him
a touch of your love
and for him the touch of your kiss.
Him who wants to give me himself—
this wisp of a babe who would whisper
and have me spend my days with him—
help me keep my gaze on him,
Mother of God so great,
Mother of my Jesus.

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Books In Review

The Rebirth of Purgatory

Hamlet in Purgatory. By Stephen Greenblatt. *Princeton University Press. 322 pp. $29.95.*

***Reviewed by* Carol Zaleski**

This is a brilliant treatment of the history of Purgatory in England and its survivals and echoes throughout Shakespeare's plays, above all *Hamlet.* The Hamlet who is in Purgatory is Hamlet Senior the ghost, not Hamlet Junior the prince; but the Purgatory that is in *Hamlet* is nothing less than the entire world of pre-Reformation England, and this world appears in a new light thanks to Stephen Greenblatt's extraordinary powers of synthesis.

Jacket photos rarely merit comment, but the one that accompanies *Hamlet in Purgatory* is striking: the author stands in a navy-blue polo shirt in front of a signpost for Purgatorio, a roadway in Custonaci, northwestern Sicily, not far from where—as the sixth-century Pope Gregory the Great tells us—one can find volcanic entrances to the nether world emitting trails of steam and sparks of fire. Greenblatt poses at this Purgatory threshold bearing a tense smile that mixes warning and welcome. It's tempting to try to interpret the smile, and the prologue almost invites us to do so, first by announcing that "this is a book about the afterlife of Purgatory, the echoes of its dead name" and then by revealing that its subject matter came to life for the author when he undertook—"with a light ironic piety"—to say Kaddish after the death of his father.

The mourner's Kaddish, Greenblatt reminds us, can be traced to the twelfth-century Ashkenazim of Rhineland, who kept the memory of the dead in *Memorbucher* and recited the Kaddish prayer in their name, in a manner reminiscent of the Christian practice of praying for the dead. Remarkably, this coincides with the period in which the Catholic picture of Purgatory as a geographic place, and as the focus of an elaborate system of suffrages, began to crystallize. Purgatory "forged a different kind of link between the living and the dead," Greenblatt writes, "or rather, it enabled the dead to be not completely dead—not as utterly gone, finished, complete as those whose souls resided forever in Hell or Heaven." From this conception a whole economy arose, resting "on the belief that prayers, fasts, almsgiving, and masses constituted a valuable commodity." The rise and fall of the Purgatory economy makes up the first half of Greenblatt's book, and it is rich enough to repay the reader even before Shakespeare and his Hamlet enter the scene.

In *The Birth of Purgatory,* which Greenblatt cites, Jacques Le Goff (the French historian of medieval "mentalities") maintains that the localization of Purgatory cannot be established prior to 1170, when one finds the earliest occurrence of *purgatorium* as a substantive. This same period is the heyday of the visionary journey narrative, typically relating the experience of an ordinary person (monk or knight, nobleman or peasant) who dies, visits the other world, and returns greatly chastened to tell the tale. Drawing upon the burgeoning scholarship on Middle English visions (by Robert Easting and Takami Matsuda, among others) as well as broader studies by Le Goff and Jean-Claude Schmitt, Greenblatt retraces the most influential of these accounts, with special attention to the cave-like entrance to Purgatory miraculously revealed to St. Patrick on an island in Lough Derg, County Donegal, where to this day there is a flourishing pilgrimage.

Greenblatt discusses the wonderful treatise on St. Patrick's Purgatory composed in the early 1180s by the Anglo-Norman Cistercian monk H. of Sawtry, which relates the adventures of a ne'er-do-well Knight Owein, who visits the cave and only barely survives the ordeal; as Virgil tells us, the descent is easier than the return. Owein is taunted by fiends who claim him as one of them, but protected by prayer he crosses a test-bridge and finally enjoys a glimpse of Paradise so delicious that he resolves upon return to go on pilgrimage and end his days as a monk.

Visionary journey tales thus provided the complete concretization of the Christian *topos* of conversion, and a powerful incentive to conversion on the part of the audience. Whatever was wanting from such eye-witness accounts would be filled in by ghost stories like *The Gast of Gy,* in which the torments of Purgatory came increasingly to resemble those of Hell; this was inevitable, according to Greenblatt, for only by eliciting fear and guilt could such tales inspire conviction and action. Yet the terror always combined with comfort, with the consolation that it was not too late to help one's kin or to save oneself.

Greenblatt's elegant retelling underscores an impression that medieval Purgatory lore is bound to make: Purgatory is the realm par excellence not only of prayer and penance but also of imagination and dream. It is a stage on which the hopes and fears of humankind are acted out, virtues and vices personified, and the prayers of all souls given concrete form.

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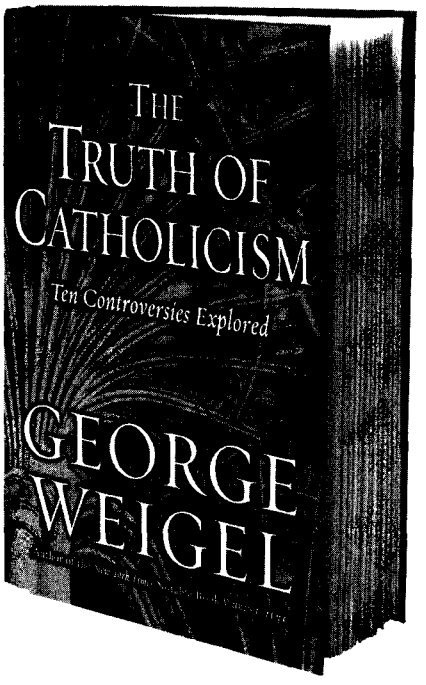
IF PURGATORY WAS BORN in 1170, when did it die? That depends on where you look. In Sicily, Malta, Mexico, wherever folk Catholicism survives, Purgatory persists in soul cakes, family picnics by the grave, and days of the dead. In the current *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as well as the writings of John Paul II and Paul VI, Purgatory endures, and along with it the economy of blessings exchanged between the living and the dead and indulgences drawn from the overflowing treasury of merits of Christ and the saints. The abuses of the indulgence system having been duly noted, it is possible to move on: *abusus non tollit usum*. Consider this: just two months after signing the joint Lutheran-Catholic declaration on justification at Augsburg on October 31, 1999—on the site of the Augsburg Confessions 482 years to the day from when Luther nailed his 95 theses to the Wittenberg church door—the Pope opened the holy door of the great millennial Jubilee, and indulgences flowed as freely as champagne.

But Purgatory did die in the lands of the Reformation. It died a particularly violent death in sixteenth-century England under the Catholic king Henry VIII who inadvertently Protestantized the realm, leading to the "stripping of the altars" (Eamon Duffy's memorable phrase) and the suppression of the monasteries, pilgrimages, relics, images, and devotions through which Purgatory and English Catholic culture had lived. Greenblatt presents the Protestant attack on Purgatory through Simon Fish's anticlerical tract *A Supplication for the Beggars* (1529) and similar polemical works which employ every device of irony and invective to portray Purgatory as a "poet's fable," lately devised, without scriptural support, by predatory monks and friars bent on filling their coffers and satisfying their corrupt desires.

As successful as the Protestant attack on Purgatory proved to be, it was not possible, Greenblatt points out, simply to drop Purgatory from the map:

> When in 1545 and 1547, with zealous Protestantism in the ascendant, the English Parliament acted to dissolve the whole system of intercessory foundations created to offer prayers for souls in Purgatory, the lawmakers and bureaucrats found themselves faced with an immense task. They had to strike at colleges, free chapels, chantries, hospitals, fraternities, brotherhoods, guilds,

From the author of the International bestseller *Witness to Hope*



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> stipendiary priests, and priests for terms of years, as well as at many smaller funds left to pay for trentals (the cycle of thirty requiem masses), obits (the yearly memorial service), flowers, bells, and candles. . . . It would have been a social catastrophe simply to shut down all institutions that had been created in the attempt to provide prayers for the dead.

A complete reorientation was needed, Greenblatt explains: the other world had to be reimagined, the social world had to be restructured, and the moral world had to be refounded, to provide a new basis for the works of mercy, charity, and spiritual discipline on which human welfare depends.

It is tempting to speculate about the extent to which the dismantling of Purgatory set in motion a wholesale transvaluation of values. After Purgatory, we no longer approve the use of fear as a goad to learning or of corporal punishment as a treatment for the misdemeanors of basically decent folk. We have difficulty appreciating the idea of merits and graces coming to us through the mediation of an ecclesial community. We prefer open-ended and individualized models of personal growth to a moral psychology based upon emblematic lists of virtues and vices.

And ghosts aren't what they used to be, either. The ghost of pre-Reformation England cuts a vivid figure: he may be a hallucination or a demon in disguise, but if he proves, by the arts of discernment, to be an "honest ghost" like Hamlet's father, then his character is most definite: he is one of the holy souls on leave from Purgatory, come to warn the living and to beg for intercessory masses, prayers, and good works as suffrages on his behalf. Absent Purgatory, the ghost becomes a more wraith-like thing, subjected to the indignity of being reduced to gauzy ectoplasm and summoned to cozy Victorian séances.

The second part of *Hamlet in Purgatory* is itself an exercise in *discretio spiritum*, testing the spirits that haunt *Hamlet* and several other of Shakespeare's plays. Greenblatt finds evidence more than sufficient to prove that Hamlet's father is a Catholic ghost, though undeniably an ambiguous one, who in visiting his Protestant son appeals for vengeance as well as for remembrance and suffrage. Thus "the space of Purgatory becomes the space of the stage where old Hamlet's Ghost is doomed for a certain term to walk the night."

Shakespeare composed *Hamlet*, Greenblatt points out, in the year (1601) when his own Catholic father died. On the question of Shakespeare's Catholicism, Greenblatt remains noncommittal; his main point is that Shakespeare dramatized the fateful tensions between Protestant and Catholic interests with as much subtlety as he portrayed the battery of doubts, fears, guilt, piety, love, honor, and self-interest that tortured Hamlet's soul. The two halves of the book cohere, to an effect that is completely enthralling.

Stephen Greenblatt has been a figure of some controversy: founder of the "new historicism" (although he prefers the term "cultural poetics"), he has been accused, along with others associated with the journal *Representations*, of preferring to work amidst a welter of historical marginalia and curious cultural practices rather than to labor in the heart of the literary traditions for which his training should have made him the reverent custodian. Reading this book, it is difficult to see what all the fuss was about. It's clear that Greenblatt—surely one of the great stylists among present-day critics—loves Shakespeare more dearly than he loves new historicism or cultural poetics or gender criticism or any other fashionable interpretive school. There is plenty of literary analysis "distributed in tiny, almost invisible particles" throughout the book, and enough pure literary appreciation to please and edify those of us who want nothing more than to sink into Shakespeare's words.

Only one thing gives me pause: Greenblatt seems to take it as a given that doubt is the natural human condition, and that the promulgators of religious belief must overcome this by appealing to passions—especially fear—strong enough to trump our animal and rational skepticism. At times this leads to a simplistic rendering of the power-interests behind Purgatory, which belies the richness of his own account. Yet Greenblatt portrays the conflicting loyalties and affections in *Hamlet* so skillfully as to suggest a deeper truth, and a better

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model of religious origins and motivations. I have a theory about Stephen Greenblatt's smile: I think he may be trying to reconcile his skepticism with his catholicity—just as, in *Hamlet*, Shakespeare fuses Senecan fatalism with Christian hope, and Protestant iconoclasm with the persistence of Catholic devotions.

Solzhenitsyn Revisited

ALEKSANDR SOLZHENITSYN: THE ASCENT FROM IDEOLOGY. By DANIEL J. MAHONEY. *Rowman & Littlefield. 181 pp. $21.95.*

***Reviewed by* Robert P. Kraynak**

ALEKSANDR SOLZHENITSYN, the Russian writer and former Soviet dissident, is not yet dead, but he is in danger of fading into oblivion in the West and of being dismissed as a crank in his own country. This is a terrible shame. For Solzhenitsyn is one of the giants of the twentieth century—a heroic witness to truth who resisted Communist tyranny and exposed the horrors of Soviet forced-labor camps in *The Gulag Archipelago*. He is also a powerful novelist whose works of historical fiction—*The First Circle, August 1914, Cancer Ward, One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*—depict the enduring struggles between good and evil in the human heart.

If these achievements are not enough to save Solzhenitsyn from premature death, then one can read Daniel Mahoney's inspiring new book *Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn: The Ascent from Ideology* to appreciate the philosophical and spiritual reasons for keeping him alive. The most important reason, Mahoney tells us, is Solzhenitsyn's understanding of "the permanent propensities of the modern mind"—namely, the fatal attraction to utopian ideologies and the totalitarian temptation to radically alter human nature. Solzhenitsyn not only dissects these propensities; he also provides a way out—an "ascent from ideology," in Mahoney's words, that aims at healing the human soul by recovering the God-given natural order of things as well as the spiritual basis of political freedom.

In presenting a reasoned defense of Solzhenitsyn, Mahoney joins a distinguished group of scholars, including Edward Ericson and Alexis Klimoff, whose mission is to rehabilitate Solzhenitsyn in Western eyes. Their task is formidable, because most Westerners have accepted the demonized caricature of Solzhenitsyn as a Russian "ayatollah," a Tsarist reactionary, a nationalistic extremist, and, to boot, an anti-Semite.

These scholars must also contend with the bias of modern intellectuals against any attempt to portray Solzhenitsyn as a spokesman for responsible political freedom. As Mahoney points out, "Contemporary intellectuals and journalists will not tolerate any serious challenge to the enlightenment or progressivist assumptions underlying modern liberty." What he means is that Western intellectuals are intolerant because they are hardly aware of decent alternatives to the secular theories of freedom and rights flowing from the Enlightenment. Hence, it is almost inconceivable to them that Solzhenitsyn could hold traditional beliefs about God, Orthodox Christianity, the mystical basis of the Russian nation, and the soul's eternal destiny while also being a spokesman for responsible political freedom (meaning constitutional limits on power, moderate nationalism, private property, and local self-government). And yet this is the real Solzhenitsyn, according to Mahoney, not the demon of Western journalism.

ROBERT P. KRAYNAK *is Professor of Political Science at Colgate University and the author of* Christian Faith and Modern Democracy *(University of Notre Dame Press).*

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The distinctiveness of Mahoney's book is the careful rhetorical strategy that he has devised, both to win over skeptical or hostile readers and to make a plausible case for Solzhenitsyn as a political moderate who is neither a Tsarist reactionary nor an Enlightenment liberal. In an introductory note, Mahoney issues a simple appeal to "take Solzhenitsyn seriously" now that we know more about the inner workings of communism. He reminds us that everything that we have learned since the fall of the Berlin Wall vindicates Solzhenitsyn. In particular, *The Black Book of Communism* (published in France in 1997) documents the crimes, mass murders, and repressions of Communist regimes in Russia, Asia, Central Europe, and the Third World, demonstrating that over 100 million people were systematically killed. From here, Mahoney moves to a careful analysis of Solzhenitsyn's writings that provides a comprehensive interpretation of his thought.

Mahoney begins by arguing that the most reliable statement of Solzhenitsyn's political views is not the sensational Harvard Address of 1978 but rather the largely ignored Liechtenstein Address of 1993. This is a bold and original way to interpret Solzhenitsyn. The Harvard Address created a huge stir because it criticized Western liberal democracies for their loss of courage during the Vietnam War and for their adherence to legalistic rights without moral restraints. The Harvard Address was strident (though also powerful and inspiring, in my view) and seemed to offer no third way between the spiritual exhaustion of Western democracy and the tyranny of Soviet communism.

The later Liechtenstein Address continues the criticism of modern Western life, challenging its notion of progress for diminishing the human soul by glorifying materialism and trivializing death. Yet the address also sounds a new theme by praising the moral strengths of Western democracy—especially Ronald Reagan's inspiring political leadership that enabled the West to win the Cold War, as well as the constitutional restraints on power that protect personal liberty. The mature Solzhenitsyn, Mahoney demonstrates, is a man capable of prudent political judgment who clearly recognizes that political freedom is indispensable for survival as well as for spiritual renewal.

Mahoney locates a crucial element of Solzhenitsyn's political teaching in his analysis of Peter Stolypin, the Prime Minister of Russia from 1906-11. Solzhenitsyn's appreciation of Stolypin has been largely unknown because it appears in the second edition of *August 1914: The Red Wheel I* (1989), which few have read. What Solzhenitsyn claims in the Stolypin chapters is that a moderate alternative to Tsarist autocracy existed in Russia in the early twentieth century—namely, a peaceful evolution toward a European-style constitutional monarchy under the enlightened statesmanship of Prime Minister Stolypin.

The main features of Stolypin's plan were the preservation of the Romanov dynasty and Orthodox Church, combined with economic and political reforms—reforms that would have given land to peasants and established local self-governing councils. Tragically, Stolypin was assassinated by terrorists who feared the success of his plan (which Solzhenitsyn estimates could have created an independent peasantry in twenty years and prevented Communist revolution). Mahoney's analysis shows Solzhenitsyn to be a Burkean-style admirer of constitutional monarchy that gradually evolves toward ordered liberty while preserving his nation's distinctive traditions.

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Solzhenitsyn's views of Russian political history have often led critics to suppose that he is a virulent nationalist. But on this matter, too, Mahoney demonstrates that Solzhenitsyn is a moderate. While he admits that Solzhenitsyn has a romantic-conservative view of nations, holding that their allure lies in their "mystical nature," Mahoney cites considerable evidence indicating that Solzhenitsyn views nations as spiritual and cultural entities rather than racial organisms, as Fascist ideology does. More importantly, Solzhenitsyn ties Russian nationalism to ethical demands for repentance and self-limitation—including apologies for national crimes and the renunciation of territorial expansion. In addition, as Mahoney points out, anyone who reads *The Russian Question at the End of the Twentieth Century* can see that Solzhenitsyn repeatedly criticizes Russian tsars for favoring imperialism over internal development. Not surprisingly, Solzhenitsyn is today an outspoken critic of Russian ultra-nationalists who "fulminate about the nefarious deeds of Masons and Jews [and] applaud aggressive chauvinism."

IN MAHONEY'S VIEW, Solzhenitsyn is best understood as a Tocquevillean deeply committed to local self-government. To defend this somewhat surprising claim, Mahoney looks to Solzhenitsyn's personal observations of Switzerland's Appenzell region, whose citizens impressed him with their old-fashioned character and devotion to local liberty. Further support comes from *Rebuilding Russia*, in which Solzhenitsyn asserts that "the future Russian Union . . . will need democracy very much."

His proposal is for a corporatist democracy "built from the bottom up" through a system of tiers that begins locally in Russian villages and culminates in the selection of a powerful president at the national level. Despite his tempered endorsement of democracy, Solzhenitsyn emphasizes that he embraces it (as Tocqueville does) primarily because he sees it as inevitable in the modern age and hopes it can be ennobled by the proper kinds of controls.

Solzhenitsyn, however, is more critical of democracy than Tocqueville and quite willing to express his admiration for the constitutional monarchy of the Stolypin period. The implication is that Solzhenitsyn uses prudence rather than abstract ideology to choose the best regime for the

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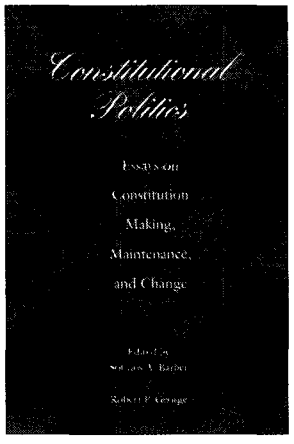
circumstances, with the main requirements of good government being constitutional limits on power to prevent crushing tyranny and the promotion of a cultural climate that encourages citizens to develop their souls.

In his last chapter, Mahoney argues that Solzhenitsyn's political moderation is rooted in the Christian belief that the highest goods (salvation, love, beauty) transcend the temporal realm of politics. Citing Solzhenitsyn's prose poems, Mahoney shows that Solzhenitsyn's loftiest theme is the soul's encounter with eternity in experiencing the grandeur of Nature (a reflection of Solzhenitsyn's "green" side) and in listening to the haunting beauty of church bells ringing in the countryside, reminding mortal men of their heavenly home. Without explicitly professing his Christian faith, Solzhenitsyn leads the reader to see that the truth about man is the Christian understanding of man as a fallen but redeemable creature with an eternal destiny.

By incorporating these points into a coherent moral vision, Mahoney provides the most fair-minded and attractive account of Solzhenitsyn's political thought to date. The great Russian writer comes alive as a original thinker who combines ancient spiritual wisdom with modern political freedom—a much-needed alternative that grounds liberty in the anti-utopian Christian view of fallen man and the inherently limited nature of politics rather than Enlightenment-progressivist theories of individual rights and human perfectibility.

My only criticism is that Mahoney does not identify the Christian thinker who ultimately lies behind Solzhenitsyn's vision: St. Augustine. While Mahoney compares Solzhenitsyn to Burke, to Tocqueville, and even to Aristotle, he never alludes to the Augustinian premises of his whole vision. Yet Solzhenitsyn himself refers to St. Augustine in *From Under the Rubble* (1974) and cites the distinction between the two cities—the realms of God and Caesar—as his justification for opposing tyranny and defending freedom. The label "political Augustinian" would thus seem to be the most accurate one for Solzhenitsyn. It would underscore the point that viewing the imperfections of the City of Man in the light of the City of God is the surest foundation for constitutional government and responsible political freedom in the age of ideology.

Thinking Allowed



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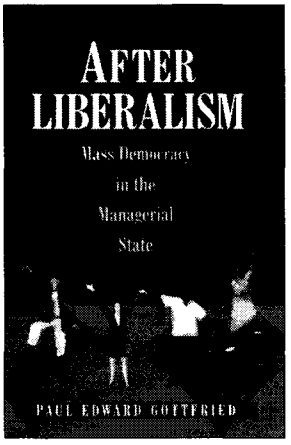

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Soldiers' Prayers

WHILE GOD IS MARCHING ON: THE RELIGIOUS WORLD OF CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS. By STEVEN E. WOODWORTH. *University Press of Kansas. 392 pp. $29.95.*

***Reviewed by* George McKenna**

IN THE PREFACE TO *While God Is Marching On*, Steven E. Woodworth, an associate professor of history at Texas Christian University, recalls that Ken and Ric Burns' 1990 documentary on the Civil War quoted freely from the letters of Civil War soldiers without revealing the frequent expressions of religious faith that ran through them. Nor, Woodworth claims, have the Burns brothers been alone in leaving out this vital part of the soldiers' lives: "Even in a field as widely studied as the Civil War, religion has been the subject of relatively few books." The omission is all the more remarkable since the Civil War broke out during a period of grassroots religious revivals—one beginning in 1857, the other in 1863-64—that influenced many of the men who served in the war. Woodworth's book, based on extensive research of letters, diaries, and memoirs of Union and Confederate troops, is meant to fill that historiographical void—which it does admirably, if in some ways selectively.

What emerges from Woodworth's study is evidence not only of widespread religious enthusiasm—one soldier described affairs in his division as "one great Methodist Camp Meeting"—but of a rich, and for the most part orthodox, understanding of Christian doctrine. These were young men who had been thoroughly Sunday-schooled or somehow made very familiar with the fundamentals of Christianity. One of the more poignant quotes, from the memoir of an Alabama soldier, could serve as a synopsis of Christian teaching on suffering and death. Badly wounded in the Battle of the Wilderness and left on the field when his army retreated, the soldier recalled that he lay on the ground that night, seemingly near death. Then he saw a star in the sky, which caused him to ask, "Who made the stars?" And he answered, "My Father, which art in heaven, made the stars, and I know Him as my Father."

> Then I thought of the suffering of Christ and how he said, "In me ye shall have peace but in the world ye shall have tribulation. But fear not for I have overcome the world." The Christ himself was not exempt from tribulation. He bore his suffering with the fortitude of faith because it was the divine plan of God. As God's child also I must bear what comes by the divine plan with the fortitude of faith, knowing that the very hairs of our heads are numbered and we are of the greatest value in the sight of our Heavenly Father.

This kind of forbearance, Woodworth notes, is not to be confused with fatalism. These soldiers acknowledged a personal God who loves and listens to people, not some indifferent force in the universe.

On the level of personal morality, soldiers from both sides of the war seemed to be in broad agreement. The letters frequently recount their struggles to avoid the sins of army life, especially gambling, cursing, and drinking. (Sexual impropriety is not directly mentioned in these letters but sometimes alluded to in soldiers' promises to keep themselves "pure.") There were attempts to maintain an atmosphere of quiet on the Sabbath; some of the men recalled the peaceful Sunday mornings in their hometowns. Woodworth thinks that their Christianity helped restrain them when they entered conquered areas. Rape and murder of civilians was extremely rare, and many soldiers were reluctant to engage in looting and destruction of property. They had not forgotten "Thou shalt not steal," though as the war became more bitter they could be brought around by a semantic change: it was "foraging," not stealing.

GEORGE MCKENNA *is Professor of Political Science at City College of New York and author of* The Drama of Democracy.

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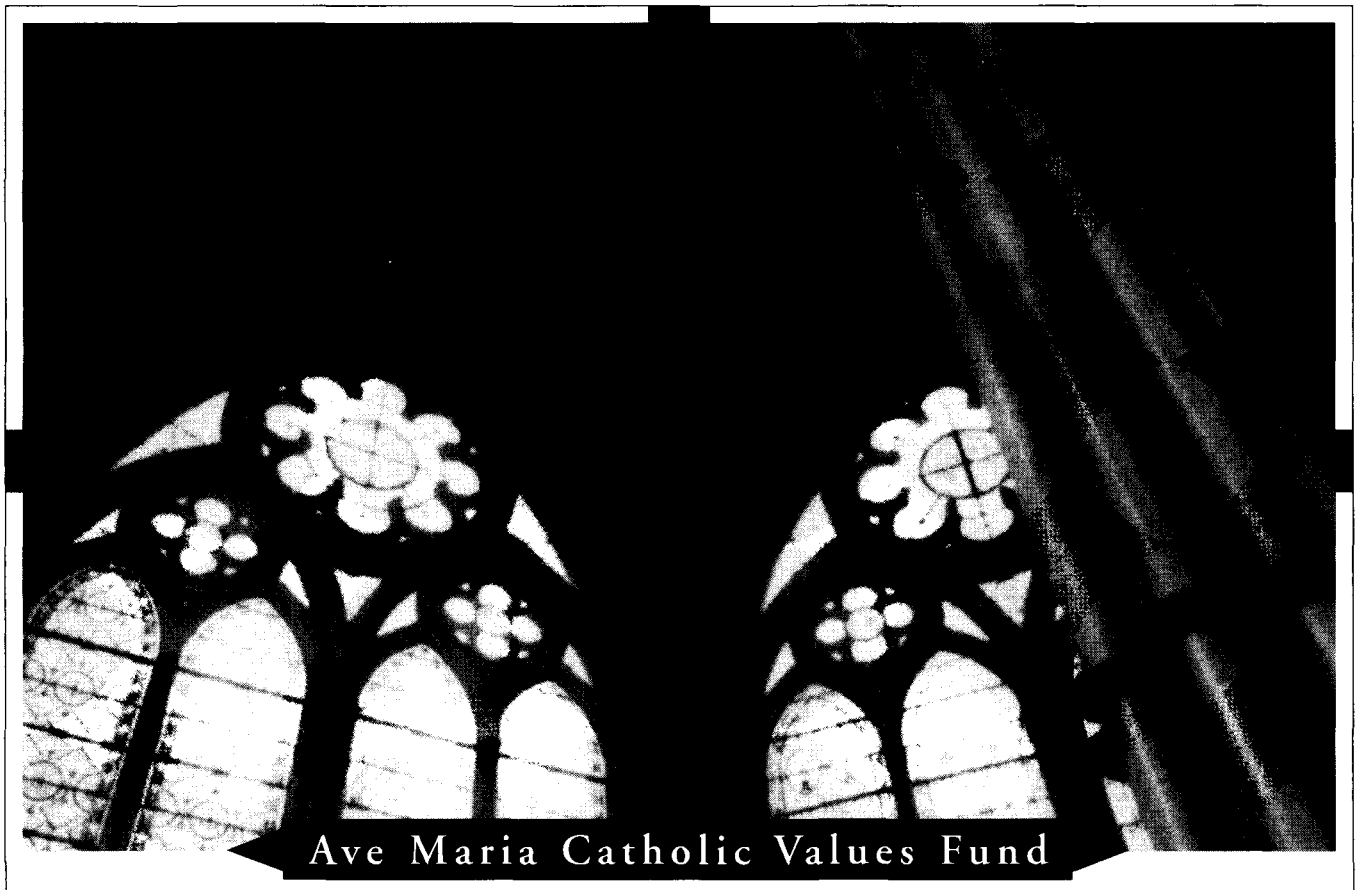

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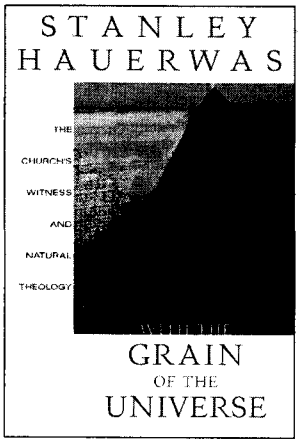
BUT IF SOLDIERS appealed to God, whose side was He on? In his Second Inaugural Address Lincoln stated the problem with characteristic rigor: "Both [sides] read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other. . . . The prayers of both could not be answered." Indeed, Lincoln added, the prayers of neither side have been answered fully because "the Almighty has His own purposes." Perhaps, Lincoln suggested, the prolonged war was the price both sides had to pay for 250 years of slavery. Lincoln's interpretation of suffering as divine retribution, a familiar theme in Protestant sermons since Puritan times, was his attempt to find meaning in the bloodshed.

A similar theme ran through many of the letters sent home, particularly those from Union soldiers. On the same day Lincoln delivered his Second Inaugural a man from Wisconsin wrote, "An all-wise Providence will end the strife and misery, as soon as the purpose for which it was ordained is accomplished." Some, like Lincoln, saw the war as a chastening for the sins of both sides, though, surprisingly, few referred to the sin of slavery. ("Greed" was the one most often cited.) Most, however, were not quite as impartial in assigning blame. Union soldiers tended to regard the Southerners as rebels against "God's own nation," therefore as rebels against Christianity itself. It was not uncommon for Union soldiers to refer to the North as "God's country."

The Confederate soldiers had less of this crusading spirit—in part, Woodworth believes, because Southern Christianity had retreated into otherworldly "pietism" in the years before the war, in reaction to the abolitionist tendencies of Northern Protestantism. Unused to thinking in terms of providential design in the world, Southern soldiers writing about God and the war adopted a very naive form of triumphalism. "God is surely with us," one wrote, as Lee's forces marched north, "[or] we never could have whipped them so bad." The problem with such reasoning, Woodworth (perhaps unnecessarily) reminds us, is that it fails to account for victories won by the enemy. No wonder the South's ultimate defeat plunged many Southerners into religious cynicism, at least temporarily.

Though Woodworth does not disclose his own religious convictions, his perspective seems to be that of evangelical Protestantism. (I found it refreshing to see references to sin without quotation marks.) Nor is Woodworth hesitant to set the record

GROUNDBREAKING THEOLOGY



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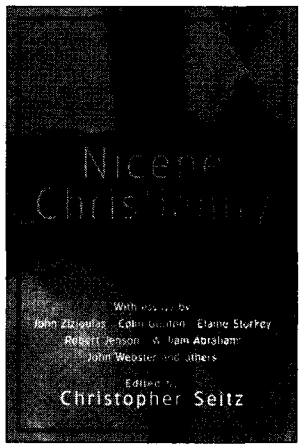

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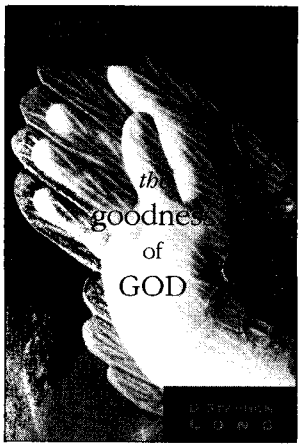

Stephen Long opens his erudite discussion of theology and ethics with the insistence that moral critique must emerge from a particular location, rather than from the fluid values of any "neutral" observer. He sets out to put theology and ethics—as well as the church—in proper relation to one another. Ethics must be based in theology, not the other way around.

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straight on the rare occasions when the soldiers or their supporters depart from theological orthodoxy. One woman, presenting a Confederate flag to Southern troops, assured them that their bravery in battle would merit eternal reward. "That may have sounded nice," Woodworth cautions, "but it was not Christian theology." The correction may not be necessary, but no serious Christian is likely to challenge it.

Sometimes, though, Woodworth's vigilant conservatism becomes more problematic. There are "Christians" in this book, and there are "almost-Christians," the latter term apparently reserved for those who could not claim to be "in Christ" even when they accepted the tenets of Christianity. The author even characterizes one soldier, who wrestles with the Christianity of his boyhood days and sometimes sounds a bit irreverent, as a "non-Christian," as if he were a Muslim or Hindu.

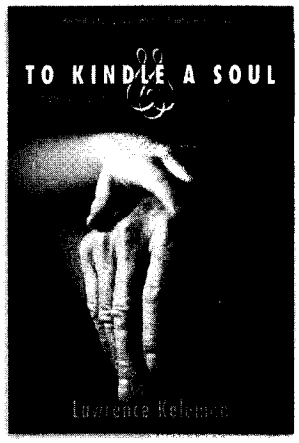
Behind these semantic niceties is what some readers will consider to be an overly suspicious attitude toward change and development in Christian doctrine. Early in his book, Woodworth quotes a journalist's observation that slavery "pickled" Southern life, keeping out all influences that might threaten the status quo. Many readers could assume that he regards the "pickling" of a culture to be undesirable. But later in the book Woodworth forthrightly asserts that, "as it pertained to the foundational teaching of Christianity, such rigid stasis was entirely good, for at the heart of the Christian religion are certain basic truths and doctrines that do not change." A few pages later he notes that the Civil War period brought little change in the theological views of most Americans, but then adds:

> The ideas of Darwin and Marx, the so-called German higher criticisms, and other strange winds of thought might already be blowing on foreign shores, but their tainted breath was scarcely to touch America for another generation.

These remarks raise some troubling questions. Is "stasis," which my dictionary defines as "a stoppage of the flow of some fluid in the body," something to be considered "entirely good"? And did Christianity learn absolutely nothing from the "strange winds" of European thought? Theological orthodoxy is one thing; it is quite another to embalm Christianity in the form of nineteenth-century American Protestantism.

This raises a related concern. Except for a couple of quotes from one Massachusetts soldier, none of the hundreds of excerpts in this book come from Roman Catholics. This is surprising, since more than 140,000 soldiers of Irish birth served in the Union armies (with perhaps 40,000 on the Confederate side), the vast majority of them Catholic. There were also large numbers of German Catholics from Wisconsin and neighboring states. Though many were either illiterate or not very religious, many others could write and were indeed devout—men such as Colonel Patrick Guiney of Massachusetts, who lost his eye and his health at Chancellorville and wrote to his wife, "God rules in Peace and War—in the circumstances and the catastrophe."

One trusts that the absence of Guiney and other Catholics from these pages is not because Woodworth numbers them among the "almost-Christians" or "non-Christians," but simply because of considerations of length; in the preface he notes, for example, that he used far less than half his source material. Still, if his purpose was, as he writes, to provide "an understanding of the vital religious component of the



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American tradition," it might have been helpful to give readers a greater sense of the variation, and even the conflict, within that tradition.

Posner's Laws of Pragmatism

FRONTIERS OF LEGAL THEORY. By RICHARD A. POSNER. *Harvard University Press. 445 pp. $35.*

***Reviewed by* Robert T. Miller**

JUDGE RICHARD A. POSNER is for many the most brilliant jurist of our times. A judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, a former chief judge of that court, and a senior lecturer in law at the University of Chicago, Posner is best known as a founder and outstanding practitioner of the law and economics movement, an academic project that seeks to use economic analysis to understand and improve the law.

He is also an extraordinarily prolific author. In addition to producing scores of scholarly articles and some of the law's most influential judicial opinions, Posner also writes an average of a book a year. In the last decade alone, he has published books on the economics of aging, law and literature, antitrust policy, the federal court system, Justice Benjamin Cardozo, legal theory in England and America, the foundations of moral and legal philosophy, the impeachment of President Clinton, and the contested presidential election of 2000. He also regularly brings out updated editions of his *Economic Analysis of Law*, the standard introductory work on law and economics. According to legend, when a young Richard Posner clerked for Supreme Court Justice William Brennan, he once drafted an opinion for the Justice in under thirty minutes. The tale is not wholly implausible.

Frontiers of Legal Theory is Posner's latest attempt to apply the results of intellectual disciplines more rigorous than law—such as economics and psychology—to practical legal problems in order "to orient law in a more scientific, economic, and pragmatic direction." Since, in Posner's view, law is best understood as a servant of social needs—as one tool among others to help human beings living in community achieve their goals—it makes sense to use the best available knowledge to change the law to better serve society's needs.

This approach to legal problems is more easily illustrated than described. An important result in economics known as the Coase Theorem, for example, states that where transaction costs are zero, the law's initial assignment of rights is irrelevant to efficiency, since if the assignment is inefficient, the parties will rectify it by a corrective transaction. Roughly, if there are no costs to transferring legal rights (and in the real world, there are always such costs, sometimes low, sometimes high), then if someone values a right more highly than does its legal owner, he will purchase the right from the owner and the right will migrate to the person who values it most. (Readers unfamiliar with economics should note that there is no problem here of the person who values a right most highly being unable to pay for it, for when economists talk about persons valuing things, they mean that such persons are willing and able to pay for them, not just that such persons would very much like to have them.) One corollary Posner draws from the Coase Theorem is that where transaction costs are irremediably high, the law should replicate the market allocation that would result if transaction costs were zero by assigning legal rights to those users who value them most.

IN POSNER'S HANDS, such seemingly simple principles lead to surprisingly illuminating results. The fair use doctrine in copyright law, for example, allows anyone to make "fair use" of a copyrighted work without payment to the copyright holder, as when I quote from Posner's copyrighted book in this review. This doctrine, Posner explains, is an instance of the law allocating legal rights efficiently where high transaction costs prevent the market from doing so. It costs too much in time and effort for me (and everyone else who wants to quote from his works) to negotiate with Posner for the right to do so, but if I could negotiate with him costlessly, he would probably agree to let me quote short passages from his book

ROBERT T. MILLER, *a member of the New York bar, is a doctoral candidate in political philosophy at Columbia University.*

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without payment, for my review is free publicity for his book and will stimulate sales.

Similarly, government's power of eminent domain, by which it may compel an owner of property to sell that property for its fair market value, is also a legal device for overcoming high transaction costs. Most taxpayers in a certain city may, for instance, be willing to pay a small amount to build a public park to be located on the property owner's land, but they may be prevented from buying the land by the high costs of organizing and pooling their money. Eminent domain overcomes this problem by allowing government to tax each potential user of the park, pool the money, and compel the transfer. These two seemingly unrelated legal rules—the fair use doctrine in copyright law and the law of eminent domain—thus turn on the same economic issue: the problem of overcoming high transaction costs.

But *Frontiers of Legal Theory* goes beyond many of Posner's other books to propose how disciplines other than economics can solve practical legal problems. Posner's signature economic analyses figure prominently, of course, including in treatments of judicial review, free speech, economic inequality, the uses of cost-benefit analysis, and the Federal Rules of Evidence, but the book also includes chapters that appeal to history, psychology, and epistemology. The chapters on the use of history in legal theory, for instance, include a powerful critique of the two published volumes of Bruce Ackerman's projected *We the People* trilogy as well as a pitiless deflation of Paul Kahn's *The Cultural Study of Law*. Posner argues convincingly that much of the history used by practicing lawyers and constitutional theorists amounts to an unpersuasive attempt "to forge a historical pedigree for their preferred positions in order to deflect charges of judicial creativity." History, unlike economics, thus turns out to have little value for solving practical legal problems. A surprising exception is the kind of originalism advocated by Robert Bork and Justice Antonin Scalia, which Posner argues is not an attempt to give the past normative force for the present but a pragmatically grounded method of promoting democratic forms of lawmaking by curtailing judicial discretion.

The chapters on psychology and epistemology are rich as well, and I choose a single illustrative point. Cognitive psychology, Posner tells us, reveals that human beings tend to

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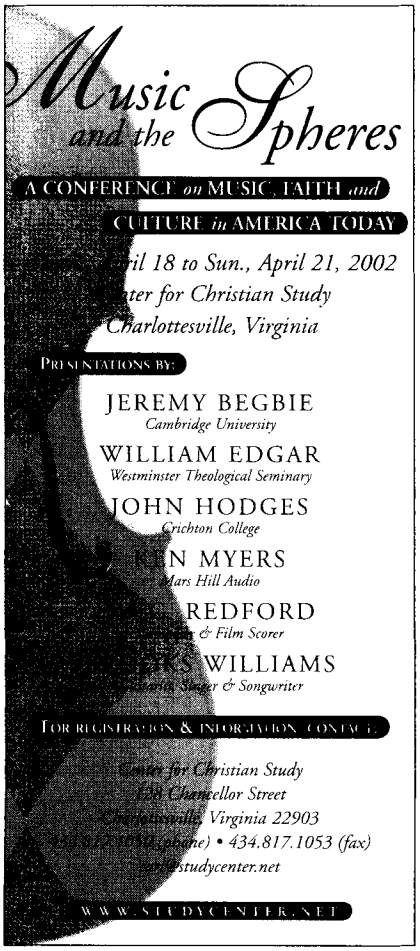
give undue weight in decision making to more easily remembered facts and images. Psychologists call this tendency to be affected by what is more easily remembered the availability heuristic. Posner argues that, because the heuristic tends to distort decision making, judges and juries (and those who frame legal rules governing their work) should guard against favoring the parties they literally see—those present in the courtroom—to the detriment of those whom they do not see, persons whose interests might be affected but who do not appear in court. For example, the availability heuristic leads judges to favor convicted criminals pleading for lighter sentences because the judges see the criminals with their own eyes, while crime victims are not parties to criminal cases and often cannot even attend the proceedings, as when the criminals being tried have murdered them. The distortion caused by the availability heuristic in this situation can be roughly balanced, Posner argues, by allowing victims (or their survivors) to make victim impact statements. More generally, good judicial temperament consists not so much in empathizing with the parties who appear in court (because of the availability heuristic, that is all too easy) but in keeping in mind the interests of those who do not appear.



The book has some minor faults, mostly inconsistencies probably arising from Posner's having assembled the text from previously published articles. For example, in an early chapter Posner argues that although some economists say that making government pay the fair market value for property it takes by eminent domain will cause the level of such takings to be efficient, this is a mistake, for government, with its power to acquire funds coercively by taxation, does not respond to financial incentives the way everyone else does. Later, however, in discussing whether evidence obtained in illegal police searches should be admissible in court, Posner makes this very mistake himself by arguing that the frequency of such searches should be set at an efficient level by making the government pay the defendant compensatory damages for violating his constitutional rights in conducting the search. Similarly, in discussing the social costs of pornography, Posner first argues that pornography's offensiveness "is very difficult to measure in even the roughest terms," but in the very next paragraph he says that the offensiveness cost "is in any event likely to be modest."

There is a curious lapse of a different kind when Posner says that the Golden Rule means that we should "be kind to the kind, and unkind to the unkind." This seems to be the ancient Greek idea, criticized by Plato in the *Republic*, that justice is helping our friends and harming our enemies, not the Golden Rule of the gospel, which is that we should treat others as we would be treated by them.

Still, these minor shortcomings notwithstanding, there can be no doubt that in *Frontiers of Legal Theory* Judge Posner has succeeded again. In the concluding chapter, moreover, he gives us reason to expect that there will be much more to come. He refers to a study showing that judges tend to retain their faculties of legal reasoning until the age of eighty. Posner was born in 1939. That means that we can look forward to another twenty years of Posner's amazing productivity, to a score of books, to hundreds of articles and judicial opinions, and to economic and legal analyses that are by turns illuminating, startling, and provocative.

Radicals of the Rhine

BASEL IN THE AGE OF BURCKHARDT: A STUDY IN UNSEASONABLE IDEAS. By LIONEL GOSSMAN. *University of Chicago Press. 608 pp. $40.*

***Reviewed by* Edward T. Oakes**

BY AN ODD COINCIDENCE (or is it really coincidence?), the two most influential theologians of the twentieth century, Karl Barth and Hans Urs von Balthasar, both lived and worked in Basel. In fact, they weren't just neighbors, but friends. Occasionally, after a day of astonishingly productive work at their respective desks, they would meet in a Basel pub called the Charon. According to Barth's biographer Eberhard Busch, it was at this tavern that Balthasar first told Barth of his then-developing theory of universal redemption: "The dogma is that hell exists," Balthasar said at the time, "not that people are in it." After

EDWARD T. OAKES, S.J., *translated Hans Urs von Balthasar's* The Theology of Karl Barth *(Ignatius) and teaches in the Religious Studies Department at Regis University in Denver, Colorado.*

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one such evening Barth wrote to a colleague to express his astonishment that this Catholic theologian was, in his words, "envisioning a kind of reformation of the Catholic Church and of Catholic theology from within. And now I am to be introduced like a new Trojan horse to bring it about (against Thomas and also against Augustine!)."

Lionel Gossman does not mention this anecdote in his teemingly rich and wondrously entertaining history, *Basel in the Age of Burckhardt*, for the very good reason that the book concentrates almost entirely on the nineteenth century (with the exception of a brief survey of Basel's earlier history at the outset of the book and a glance forward to the twentieth century in the last chapter). But after reading his account of the influence of Basel's intellectual atmosphere on such giants as Friedrich Nietzsche, Jacob Burckhardt, Johann Bachofen, and Franz Overbeck, the theological daring of Barth and Balthasar no longer seems so exotic or extravagant.

Did the city workers in Basel's waterworks treat the Rhine with some kind of special chemical that made intellectual boldness seem as easy as hopping on a bus? And if so, did that same chemical perhaps also insure that all these Baselers would express their radical daring, not in revolutionary politics, but in a sharp critique of liberal bourgeois civilization, the same civilization that gave them their platform and their living in the first place? Was it, in other words, Basel itself that made each man within his chosen field the scourge of his liberal colleagues?

Gossman seems to think so, for toward the end of his book he quotes a telling passage from Barth's monograph *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century*. "The Basel theologian," Barth claimed, "is from the start and in all essentials conservative. . . . At the same time, however, he takes secret, almost sympathetic delight in the radicalism and extravagances of others." With the exception of Overbeck, none of the figures treated by Gossman was a theologian: Bachofen was a philologist, Burckhardt an historian of the Renaissance, and Nietzsche the famous philosopher. But what emerges from Gossman's portrait of them all is a kind of "conservative radicality," meaning that all four Baselers were intensely antiliberal, even antistatist; but even so they never fell prey to the revanchist temptation of trying to restore some long-lost ancien régime. All four men knew that European consciousness had been irrevocably transformed by the French Revolution.

These men also had a highly skeptical attitude toward Christianity, to put it mildly. But as Gossman often makes clear and sometimes merely implies, their main bogeyman was a liberalizing Christianity that tried to combine the message of the New Testament with nationalism, progress, and science, a program that to their minds only put a patina of Christian rhetoric over the bourgeois etiquette and aggrandizing ambitions of the business classes. And precisely because all four men harbored the deepest suspicions about the very civilization that exalted those same bourgeois virtues, they could only abominate a religion that sought to make peace with such a Leviathan.

Burckhardt, for example, grew increasingly dismayed at the direction that German civilization was taking in the two decades leading up to the revolutions of 1848, and in the light of later German history his misgivings sound remarkably prescient. "The messianism, nationalism, and militarism he sensed among the German radicals of 1848 filled him with misgivings," says Gossman, "and led later to his well-known predictions of despotic and militarist regimes to come once nationalism and democracy had triumphed."

Nietzsche's own contempt for German culture is even more well known: he called the opening line of the German national anthem *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles* "the most idiotic phrase ever uttered," attacked Bismarck's united Germany as "one more stupidity in the world," and famously sneered that German intelligence came from beer, not brains.

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But Nietzsche's diatribe was not the result, as it might first seem, of the sour grapes of a sickly man, but was ultimately rooted in a shrewd diagnosis of nineteenth-century European civilization in its entirety, across all boundaries. As he said of his Basel days in *Ecce Homo*, "In defiance of all the known prejudices of our democratic age I insisted that the great optimistic-rationalist-utilitarian victory . . . was at bottom nothing other than a symptom of declining strength, incipient senility, somatic exhaustion—*it*, and not its opposite, pessimism."

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For the same reason the other Baselers were united in their attacks on Prussian academic culture centered in Berlin. Burckhardt attacked the Prussian historiography of Leopold von Ranke with its attention to nation-states, diplomacy, and battles, and called on the historians' guild to concentrate its energies on the more humane topics of culture, art, and daily life. And theologian Overbeck could be even more scathing than Nietzsche when speaking of liberal theologians, especially the Berlin-based Adolf von Harnack, whom he called "the supreme salon professor," "the Protestant Abbé," "the court friseur of His Majesty's theological wig," and so forth.

All four subjects of Gossman's absorbing civic history were convinced that the German union of state and culture would prove disastrous for culture. They feared the very same expansion of state power that other German academics had considered necessary if German culture were to be preserved and promoted. For the Baselers, this was a Faustian bargain. "In fact," says Gossman, "they were convinced that far from promoting culture, the alliance of power and culture was a threat to genuine culture and had already resulted in the contamination of culture by power, both directly as a result of state patronage of the arts and control of the institutions of culture, such as the schools and universities, and indirectly through the mechanisms of the market, the media, and fashion." As Bachofen said with typical Basel hyperbole, "It is because I love freedom that I hate democracy."

OF COURSE SUCH AN above-the-fray attitude would hardly have been possible for Barth and Balthasar after the debacle of Nazi Germany, and both were politically engaged citizens of the Swiss Federation to the extent consonant with their respective roles as Protestant minister and Catholic priest. But Switzerland's neutrality

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perforce limited their influence, such as it was—perhaps providentially. Gossman mentions how German-speaking historians had used Philip of Macedon (father of Alexander the Great and the military conqueror of the Greek city-states) and Demosthenes (the Athenian orator who bitterly but vainly opposed Philip's designs) as code figures representing Bismarck and his well-intentioned but ineffective opponents. Predictably, the Prussian historians praised Philip for finally bringing the political chaos of the Greeks under control, thus allowing Hellenism to spread throughout the known world, from the Himalayas to Gibraltar.

But from their Basel redoubt, "conservatives" like Bachofen and Burckhardt would point out how Greek culture thereupon sank into mediocrity, with bombastic sculpture, second-rate philosophy, and political lassitude constituting its main legacy to the Roman Empire. It was thus not the job of a historian to salute historical necessity, Burckhardt insisted, especially not when the apologist was being paid by the Prussian government (both Hegel and von Ranke were professors at Berlin and thus on the payroll of the King of Prussia). As Gossman summarizes Burckhardt's view of history: "If there was a historical necessity, the proper way for men to serve it was not by trying to anticipate it and sacrifice everything to it, but by acting according to their own best judgment . . . just as it had not been Demosthenes' job to recognize the historical 'necessity' of the triumph of Philip of Macedon."

Both Barth and Balthasar, in my opinion, share something of this same attitude. Liberalism in the culture, democracy in more and more parts of the world, globalization in the world economy, pluralism in theology—everywhere these trends are triumphant. So it does not surprise one to learn that, after a brief moment of influence, Barth holds hardly any sway in the Protestant churches now. And if Balthasar is ever to exert major influence it will have to be in the future, for at the moment the professional clerisy of theologians keeps him carefully cordoned off, so that only true aficionados devote much time to him.

But knowledge of such outcomes would never have deflected either of them, any more than hopeless prospects kept Demosthenes from his mission, or than the approaching vulgarity of the twentieth century kept Bachofen, Burckhardt, Overbeck, and Nietzsche from arguing their

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views. So before rejecting Barth's or Balthasar's critique of liberalism, one should recall that Burckhardt was right: ever since the French Revolution, continental Europe has known only one despotism after another. Just because we have escaped them all now, doesn't mean there isn't another one coming.

BRIEFLY NOTED

THE KORAN: A VERY SHORT INTRODUCTION. By MICHAEL COOK. *Oxford University Press. 162 pp. $8.95.*

The Qur'an is one of the world's most important and most enigmatic books. In a beautifully written, concise, and insightful study, packed into one of a series of "very short" introductions to a multitude of subjects, Michael Cook makes clear some of the mysteries of this holy book, in part by his excellent examples. He tells about its origins, its content, organization, translation, pronunciation, commentaries, and dissemination. Cook takes up the subtle ironies connected with the book (Islam, for instance, is a missionary religion but the sacredness of the Qur'an means that Muslims face a "clear and insoluble conflict between the desire to proclaim God's word to the unbelievers and the shudder of them touching it"). He takes up such seemingly minor but revealing topics as treating the Qur'an as literature, disposing of the worn text, and the role of calligraphy. Many of his descriptions are evocative and explanatory. Here is one on the effect of *tajwid*, a musical version of reciting the Qur'an: "It is not unseemly to weep silently during a particularly moving recitation. Much of the intensity that gives the art of Koranic recitation its effectiveness comes from a union of grave and dignified restraint with a kind of playing with fire." To demonstrate the singular hold the Qur'an has in Muslim society, Cools tells of "a woman who for thirty years communicated *exclusively*" with quotations from the Qur'an. For anyone, at almost any level of knowledge, wanting to learn more about the Qur'an, this is a wonderful place to start. Reading Cook does not replace immersion in the Islamic holy book, but it does prepare one for reading it. The miniature format of the *Very Short Introduction* and its miniature price only make the study more alluring.

— *Daniel Pipes*

THE MUSLIM JESUS: SAYINGS AND STORIES IN ISLAMIC LITERATURE. By TARIF KHALIDI. *Harvard University Press. 245 pp. $22.95.*

ISLAMIC INTERPRETATIONS OF CHRISTIANITY. Edited by LLOYD RIDGEON. *Curzon. 255 pp. $45.*

In 1989, the Iranian media called the showing in Istanbul of Martin Scorsese's controversial film *The Last Temptation of Christ* a plot "hatched by world arrogance and international Zionism" and soon after fundamentalist Muslims and fundamentalist Christians together protested the movie's screening. A decade later, the "Shari'ah Court of the UK" condemned Terrence McNally to death for his defamatory play about Jesus, *Corpus Christi*, and again the faithful of the two faiths together protested outside the theater. The man who issued the edict, Omar Bakri Muhammad, commented that "the Church of England has neglected the honor of the Virgin Mary and Jesus." Muslim groups also protested when the Brooklyn Museum mounted a scurrilous exhibit of the Virgin Mary. Don't they have the wrong religious figure? No: from the Qur'an on, Jesus has always had a special place in Muslim piety, as Tarif Khalidi (professor of Arabic at Cambridge University) shows in his exemplary study, *The Muslim Jesus*. In fact, he even writes about a "Muslim gospel" which, though emphatically denying the divinity of "Isa ibn Maryam," gives him an honored place as a prophet. The 303 snippets that Khalidi translates and comments on from a wide range of sources (*hadith*, belles-lettres, mystical works, etc.) do convincingly establish his point that, "In his Muslim habitat, Jesus becomes an object of intense devotion, reverence, and love." In an introductory essay, Khalidi traces the origins of the "Muslim gospel" and concludes by observing that this cross-religious history offers some lessons for a time like the present, when Christian-Muslim tensions are rife. The mostly Christian and British authors of ten fine chapters in *Islamic Interpretations of Christianity* have a decidedly less cheerful take on their subject. The book deals in roughly equal parts with the premodern and modern eras; in both, it finds that Islamic views of Christianity and Christians are generally harsh. The Qur'an is rather more friendly to an (Islam-receptive) ideal Christianity than the one that actually exists; the *hadith* literature consigns Christians to social and religious inferiority; the legal literature creates a binary Muslim vs. non-Muslim distinction that is "never" breached; even Jalal ad-Din Rumi, the favorite poet of mystically inclined Americans, turns out to be less inclusive and more doctrinaire than they realize. In the modern era, Sayyid Qutb's aggressive attitude toward Christians amounted to an aggressive and "radical break" with traditional Sunni Islam; and while no one can find enlightened attitudes among British Muslims toward Christianity, most of the views expressed fit into "an older anti-Christian polemical tradition." There is a long way to go before adherents of these two faiths can achieve the maturity of the Christian-Jewish relationship.

—*DP*

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Legacy of the Prophet: Despots, Democrats, and the New Politics of Islam. By Anthony Shadid. *Westview. 364 pp. $26.*

Another Western journalist careening around the Middle East, interviewing hundreds of people from cab drivers to heads of state, churning out a book with the words "of the Prophet" in his title, insisting that Islamism is really our friend. (Other examples of this genre include Milton Viorst's *In the Shadow of the Prophet: The Struggle for the Soul of Islam* and Mark Huband's *Warriors of the Prophet: The Struggle for Islam,* both published in 1998.) Shadid, formerly the Associated Press correspondent in Cairo, is a good writer and observer (and he reports much of interest in the course of his book), but he has not a clue about Islam. Interestingly, he guilelessly admits as much in his introduction, where he writes that Islam, through all his research on the subject, has remained to him "sometimes foreign and all too often confusing and troubling." In his puzzlement, he falls for the voguish idea that Islamism's future lies in "movements that are willing to exercise tolerance and adopt pluralism and compromise as both tactics and ideals." The subtitle refers to Shadid's overly optimistic theory that despots are part of Islamism's past and democrats make up its future. That a journalist, someone paid for careful observation, can reach such a conclusion betrays a psychological barrier to seeing realities as they are. For the record: Islamism (as distinct from Islam itself) is a utopian ideology that seeks to use the State and other institutions to establish a totalitarian domination over the lives of individuals. Islamists, like other political radicals, are ready to use whatever tools are at hand; so when violent attempts to take power appear to have reached a dead end, they are quite ready to pursue the same ends through less violent means. This does not make them democrats nor does it render their movements tolerant and pluralist. Shadid and other journalists do a grave disservice in closing their eyes to these plain facts.

—*DP*

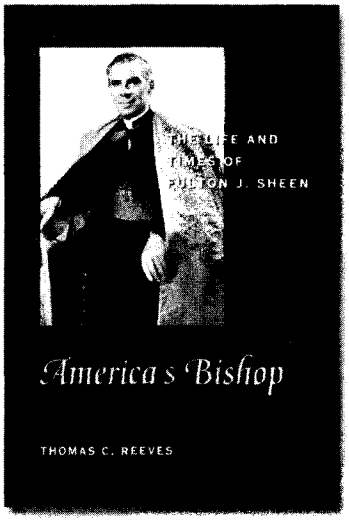
Psychology and American Catholicism: From Confession to Therapy? By C. Kevin Gillespie, S.J. *Crossroad. 214 pp. $24.95.*

The new science of psychology—that is, the psychology that took off with Freud, Jung, Adler, and so many oth-

America's Bishop

The Life and Times of Fulton J. Sheen

by Thomas Reeves



"A controversial, challenging, and totally absorbing biography of one of the most beloved figures of the early days of television, and perhaps the most remarkable bishop in the history of the Catholic church in America."

— Michael Novak
Jewett Chair in Religion and Public Policy, American Enterprise Institute

ISBN: 1-893554-25-2
$25.95, 463 pages, cloth

Fulton J. Sheen, the leading American Catholic of the twentieth century, became familiar to a generation of Americans as the radiant figure in full Bishop's robes who held the nation spellbound during the 1950s on his television show, *Life Is Worth Living* which was carried on 113 television and 300 radio stations reaching an audience of 30 million.

Sheen was the Church's chief evangelist as well as its most charismatic presence. Among his thousands of converts were celebrities such as Clare Booth Luce and Henry Ford II, and former communists Louis Budenz and Elizabeth Bentley. Thomas Reeves discusses these conversions and Sheen's close friendship with J. Edgar Hoover. Reeves also explores, for the first time, the struggle between Sheen and his chief rival, Francis Cardinal Spellman—a battle of ecclesiastical titans that led all the way to the Pope and to Sheen's final humiliation and exile.

As the *Catholic Digest* notes, Reeves has "an ear for the telling anecdote [about a man] who recognized and regretted his flaws: pride, vanity, and a fondness for comfort" and who never stopped yearning for transcendence.

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ers, and has displaced the "old" psychology that went back to Aristotle and Aquinas—has always been a troubled enterprise. From the start, the leading thinkers have fought bitterly over whose approach really reflects the way human beings think, feel, and act. Religious and commonsense critics from outside the field have never been lacking either. This deeply troubled state of psychology is only dimly acknowledged in Jesuit Father C. Kevin Gillespie's *Psychology and American Catholicism.* The book mostly comes off as boosterism for psychology—telling its twentieth-century history in American Catholic circles as a story of the progressively increasing acceptance of and reliance on psychology at every level of the Church. Gillespie is not blind to the danger of going too far in accommodating psychology. He sees psychology and Catholicism, however, as "two spires of inspiration, two forces of knowledge and wisdom," that "now collaborate in the construction of a solid banner of wisdom." Gillespie's book offers something not available elsewhere. He tells the story of many leading American Catholic figures as they embraced psychology's developments and promoted them in the Church. To name just a few: Fr. Edward Pace, who brought experimental psychology to the Catholic University of America; Fr. Thomas Verner Moore, who opened the first psychiatric outpatient department in Washington; Sr. Annette Walters, whose books introduced thousands of Catholic university students to psychology. The most conspicuous deficiency in the book is the lack of information about the different theoretical positions held by the various leaders chronicled in the book. Gillespie tells us very little about the intellectual history of Catholic psychology departments and institutions as they were being founded, as important books were written, and as bishops acted and reacted. Certainly it is important for the Church to understand psychology and whatever truths experimental science uncovers about the soul. At the same time, it seems as or more crucial now for psychology to understand the Church. The truths that theology and philosophy can teach it about the motivations of the human heart may be just what psychology needs to sort out its own internal discord.

— Gerry Rauch

SMILING THROUGH THE CULTURAL CATASTROPHE: TOWARD THE REVIVAL OF HIGHER EDUCATION. By JEFFREY HART. *Yale University Press. 288 pp. $26.95 paper.*

It is a curious fact that, while liberals and radicals on college campuses tend to dismiss conservatives as ignorant bigots and hold themselves up as exemplars of humanism, it is usually the conservatives who defend the careful study of humanity's greatest cultural achievements. Jeffrey Hart, professor of English emeritus at Dartmouth College and a senior editor at *National Review,* is one of those ignorant conservatives who spends his time reading and thinking about the likes of Homer, Augustine, Dante, Shakespeare, Molière, and Dostoevsky. That the classic texts written by these authors are rarely "part of the intellectual equipment even of professors in the liberal arts today, much less their students" is what lies behind the "catastrophe" to which Hart refers in his title. Rather than counseling despair, however, he encourages us to "smile" while continuing to transmit the wisdom embedded in the history of civilization. After all, today's students and professors must surely "long for something more serious and more lasting" than the petty ideological crusades of the moment. They will thus eventually come back to their senses. And when they do, the great old books—and the great old debates recorded in those books—will still be there. In ten elegant chapters, Hart demonstrates how best to study our cultural heritage by exploring one such debate in the history of Western literature: the quarrel between Athens and Jerusalem. The dynamic interaction between these two camps—usually characterized by tension, sometimes synthesis, and

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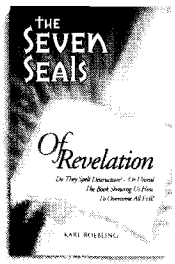

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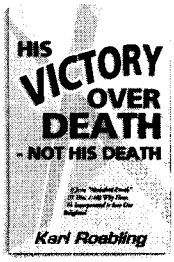

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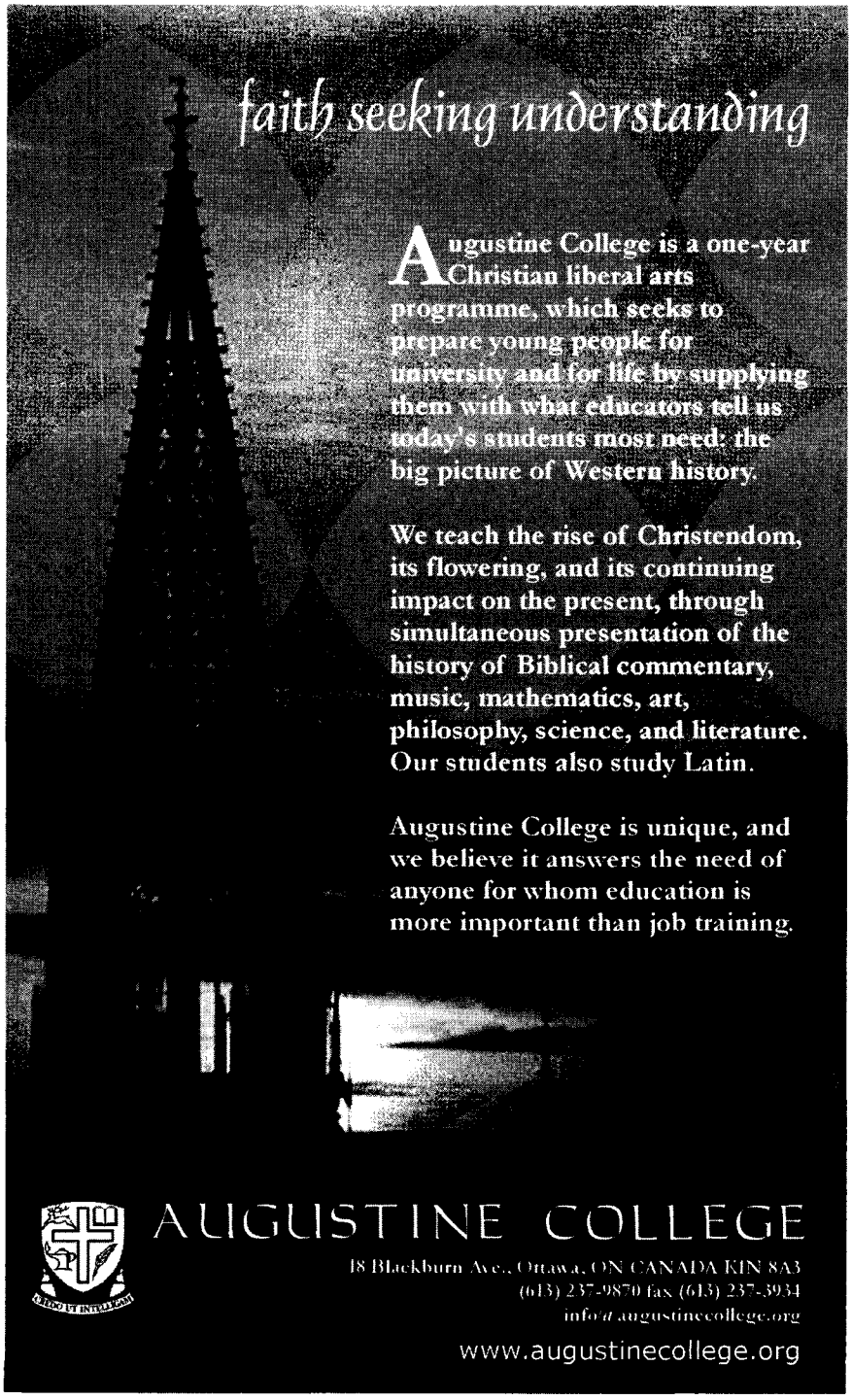
sometimes outright conflict—exemplifies Western thinking at its most profound, and the author acts as a splendid guide throughout. We do indeed come away from the book hopeful for the future of liberal education in America, not least because we know that there are still scholars and teachers like Jeffrey Hart.

The Truth of Catholicism: Ten Controversies Explored. By George Weigel. *HarperCollins. 196 pp. $24.*

George Weigel, author of the authoritative biography of John Paul II, *Witness to Hope,* and regular contributor to these pages, makes a big gift in a small and beautifully wrapped package. In an easy to read style he addresses ten hard questions often asked about Christian faith and life, and about Catholicism in particular. For example: Jesus as the only Savior. The connection between faith and authority. Why Catholicism is not simply a church among churches. The liberating power of moral law. Sexuality and the love of God. The truth in world religions. Catholic foundations of democracy, and, finally, the sadness of not being a saint. For both cradle Catholics and intelligent inquirers, this is catechesis of a high order, offering numerous "Ah, ha!" moments of intellectual and spiritual discovery. Warmly recommended.

The Meaning of Conservatism. By Roger Scruton. *Revised Third Edition. St. Augustine. 272 pp. $30 cloth.*

Originally published in 1980, now substantially rewritten and available in the United States for the first time, this ambitious and thoughtful defense of conservatism as a political doctrine makes for bracing reading. The author's outlook is very English—not just in his examples, which invariably come from British politics, but much more so in his approach to political life and ideas. When was the last time you heard an American conservative say that "conservatism is not about freedom, but about authority"? Only some of our so-called paleoconservatives come close to such views, and even they end up appealing to long-lost ideals of liberty to make their case. But not Scruton, who prefers to speak of the need to "perpetuate a social organism." As a profound challenge to American—no less than liberal, democratic, and socialist—assumptions, *The Meaning of Conservatism* is an important work.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EVANGELICALS AND POLITICS IN ASIA, AFRICA, AND LATIN AMERICA. By PAUL FRESTON. *Cambridge University Press. 344 pp. $59.95.*

The first volume in a big project on evangelicals and the Third World funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts and carried out in cooperation with the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C. Freston is a Brazilian sociologist with first-hand experience of evangelicalism in Latin America and a formidable knowledge of the large and growing literature on evangelicalism elsewhere. The present book serves as a map of what is known and what needs to be known, constituting an elaborate annotated bibliography that will be of great assistance to specialists. Freston argues effectively for the indigenous nature of evangelical growth in Latin America and elsewhere, and against conspiracy theories involving a central directorate based in the U.S. He is also sharply critical of the methodology of the huge *Fundamentalism Project* directed by Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby.

SEMINARS IN CHRISTIAN SCHOLARSHIP
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Roger Lundin, English, Wheaton College
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Kevin Vanhoozer, Systematic Theology,
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Nicholas Wolterstorff, Philosophical Theology,
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Andrew Walls, Centre for the Study of Christianity
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PERSONAL CATHOLICISM. By MARTIN X. MOLESKI, S.J. *Catholic University of America Press. 222 pp. $54.95.*

This is an important and utterly engaging study, for all the reasons that Avery Cardinal Dulles cites in the foreword, and it is a pity that the price is so steep. Moleski examines the theological epistemologies—how do we know what we know?—of John Henry Newman and Michael Polanyi. Writing a century apart, Newman and Polanyi were both post-critical, expanding the definition of reason to include what Newman called the illative sense and Polanyi called tacit knowledge. Those familiar with Newman's *Grammar of Assent* and Polanyi's *Personal Knowledge* will appreciate the ways in which Moleski makes sometimes unexpected connections between the two thinkers, despite Polanyi's critical disposition toward Catholicism. *Personal Catholicism* is a most welcome contribution to today's rethinking of the relationship between faith and reason.

DARWIN'S GOD: EVOLUTION AND THE PROBLEM OF EVIL. By CORNELIUS G. HUNTER. *Brazos. 192 pp. $17.99.*

Everybody knows by now, or should know, that the theory of evolution is about much more than science.

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From Darwin to the present day, some champions of the theory acknowledge that it aims to serve as a kind of "theodicy," explaining why God, if there is a God, made such a strange world. Hunter usefully makes explicit what too often remains implicit in the growing disputes about the status of evolutionary theory.

THE UNGOVERNABLE CITY: JOHN LINDSAY AND HIS STRUGGLE TO SAVE NEW YORK. By VINCENT J. CANNATO. *Basic. 702 pp. $35.*

So many years after politicians began running away from the L-word, one is reminded that John Lindsay's winning poster in his 1965 campaign for mayor of New York was a photo with his two opponents seated and Lindsay standing. The motto: "Would the real liberal please stand up?" Lindsay, who was at first hailed as a White Knight and was touted as a presidential candidate in 1972, served two disastrous terms as mayor, and his failures contributed powerfully to the discrediting of the liberal label. He poured money the city didn't have into endless antipoverty schemes in order to show that the city "cared," and bribed black radicals and white crazies, including Abbie Hoffman, by paying them under the table. He was also a strident but embarrassingly ill-informed critic of U.S. policy in Vietnam. But nobody questioned his personal integrity or good intentions. Before he died last year at age seventy-nine, he had neither savings nor income and Mayor Rudolph Giuliani—in style and substance Lindsay's very antithesis—put him on the city pension plan with a no-show job. To read this book is to relive an important part of the squalid sixties and seventies. It could have been at least a hundred pages shorter if the author had not felt obliged to include almost everything that almost every pundit said at the time about almost anything.

THE TRUTH OF POWER: INTELLECTUAL AFFAIRS IN THE CLINTON WHITE HOUSE. By BENJAMIN R. BARBER. *Norton. 320 pp. $26.95.*

On the dustjacket, Benjamin Barber of the University of Maryland is described (by himself?) as the author of *Strong Democracy* "and other contemporary classics of political thought," and by historian Douglas Brinkley as "a caring idealist with a vulnerable temperament." The vulnerable temperament is everywhere here on display. He was infatuated with Bill Clinton and all aflutter when he was chosen as one of Clinton's intellectual pickups for occasional bull sessions. Then he discovered that Clinton didn't really respect him and was not serious about ideas, from which Barber draws the lesson that intellectuals should stay away from power. Others might conclude that naive academics panting for a pat on the head from the powerful should grow up.

GETTING OVER EQUALITY: A CRITICAL DIAGNOSIS OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN AMERICA. By STEVEN D. SMITH. *New York University Press. 214 pp. $40.*

Smith, who has written for these pages, teaches law at the University of Notre Dame, and our Editor-in-Chief stands by what he says on the back cover of this fine book: "Moving beyond stale arguments about the 'separation of church and state' and exposing the incoherence of doctrines of 'equality,' Smith proposes a vibrant practice of tolerance and prudence that holds high promise for our continuing debate over the role of religion in the public square. His argument is lucid, forceful, sometimes eccentric, and refreshingly free of legalistic cant."

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM: HISTORY, CASES, AND OTHER MATERIALS ON THE INTERACTION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT. By JOHN T. NOONAN, JR. and EDWARD MCGLYNN GAFFNEY, JR. *Foundation. 998 pp. $60.*

A second and much updated edition of the 1986 book by Judge Noonan, *Religious Freedom* will be warmly welcomed by all who deal professionally with questions of law and religion. Much more than a conventional casebook, although cases receive due attention, the book provides extended and thoughtful essays on the biblical, cultural, and historical interactions of religion and the powers that be, with particular reference to the American experience both past and present.

THE SECOND SPRING OF THE CHURCH IN AMERICA. By GEORGE A. KELLY. *St. Augustine. 195 pp. $25.*

Taking his title from Cardinal Newman's famous address, a veteran priest and skilled polemicist goes inveighing against what has gone wrong with the Catholic Church in this country since the Council and tells us what can be done about it. Vintage Kelly, and a bracing critique and proposal.

THEOLOGIANS OF THE BAPTIST TRADITION. Edited by TIMOTHY GEORGE and DAVID S. DOCKERY. *Broadman & Holman. 414 pp. $24.99 paper.*

A substantially updated and revised version of *Baptist Theologians* by the same editors, this book is a useful introduction to a tradition that is often thought to reject tradition. Among the authors whose work and life are profiled are Frank Stagg, W. A. Criswell, Carl F. H. Henry, A. T. Robertson, Herschel H. Hobbs, and Charles Haddon Spurgeon. These and others, the editors note, have

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been shapers of the Southern Baptist tradition in particular.

Calhoun and Popular Rule. By H. Lee Cheek, Jr. *University of Missouri Press. 202 pp. $29.95.*

It may be impossible to rescue the thought of John C. Calhoun from his identification with the South and its "peculiar institution," but Professor Cheek makes a valiant effort that is worthy of very serious attention. Calhoun's sophisticated theory of the "concurrent majority" as the American republic's alternative to both despotism and anarchy holds much that might appeal, if they understood it, to both liberal and conservative parties today. His adamant insistence upon conciliation as the alternative to conflict might also, just possibly, have avoided the Civil War and, as Lincoln phrased it, put slavery on the road to ultimate extinction. *Calhoun and Popular Rule* is not, however, an exercise in what might have been. Prof. Cheek offers it as a challenging contribution to contemporary political theory, and the challenge should be taken up.

Western Creed, Western Identity: Essays in Legal and Social Philosophy. By Jude P. Dougherty. *Catholic University of America Press. 256 pp. $24.95 paper.*

The former dean of philosophy at Catholic University brings together formidable erudition and wisdom in a convincing affirmation of the credal basis of the culture of the West. Subjects range from religion and politics, to epistemology, to contemplation as the necessary ambiance in the search for truth.

The One-Minute Philosopher. By Montague Brown. *Sophia. 207 pp. $19.95.*

The subtitle promises much more than any book should promise: "Quick Answers to Help You Banish Confusion, Resolve Controversies, and Explain Yourself Better to Others." It does, however, provide a great deal of wisdom in succinct form on hundreds of subjects ranging from Admiration and Adulthood to Wisdom, Wish, and Wonder. On most of these topics, the author offers a good place to start toward deeper reflection.

Garlands of Grace: An Anthology of Great Christian Poetry. By Regis Martin. *Ignatius. 130 pp. $11.95.*

Of anthologies of poems you can never have enough, especially when the poems are as judiciously selected as they are for this little collection that brings together many standards but also offers surprises. The flowery title notwithstanding, *Garlands of Grace* leans against the sentimental.

In the Days of the Angels. By Walter Wangerin. *Waterbrook. 164 pp. $13.95.*

A lovely little book of stories, carols, reflections, and whimsy—all illuminating the significance of Christmas. Wangerin is author of the award-winning *Book of the Dun Cow*, and this volume suggests itself for Christmas reading, and giving.

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THE PUBLIC SQUARE

A Continuing Survey of Religion and Public Life

Richard John Neuhaus

The American Mind

Students of the political philosopher Leo Strauss are fond of quoting the master to the effect that the American polity is built on foundations that are low but solid. When the discussion turns to the constituting ideas undergirding our political institutions, and the ideas that characterize what might be called "the American mind," the term inevitably invoked is pragmatism. Pragmatism, it is suggested by some, is at most a garden variety philosophy; it is more an attitude than a philosophy, and is, for all practical purposes, no more than practicality. It is a can-do, go-getting, commonsensical disposition that is sometimes fitted out with philosophical trimmings for intellectual occasions. Pragmatism is the doctrine that truth, or at least all the truth that matters, is the truth that "works."

That is the long-standing caricature of the American mind that the Germans with their grand system-building, the English with their implacable empiricism, and the French with their elegantly convoluted flights into whatever have, at least until fairly recently, loved to deride, thus buttressing their sense of intellectual and cultural superiority to an offensively successful society with no mind at all. This long history of anti-Americanism among European intellectuals has been admirably chronicled by James Ceaser in *Reconstructing America: The Symbol of America in Modern Thought* (Yale, 1997).

It is not only European thinkers, however, who criticize as all too low and not so solid the philosophy, or mindset, called pragmatism. American critics, too, frequently complain about the American habits of mind that end up in instrumentalizing and relativizing truth claims, subjecting every argument or insight to the test of what works. And, at the most popular level, to the test of "what works for you." A half century ago, in *We Hold These Truths*, Father John Courtney Murray praised the "American Proposition" for producing institutions that, he said, invite and facilitate a political process of citizens "locked in civil debate." He left no doubt that it is the holding of truths that makes that debate possible. Today it is not unusual to find Catholic intellectuals sharply criticizing Murray, and arguing that our political and economic order insidiously undermines the holding and debating of truths in common. Among evangelical Protestants, the ideas of "reconstructionism" associated with the late R. J. Rushdoony are, albeit in tempered form, more widespread than is commonly acknowledged. Catholics appealing to natural law and the rich anthropology of Catholic teaching join with evangelicals appealing to biblical law and an explicitly Christian worldview in declaring, or sometimes strongly implying, that the American experiment is fundamentally misfounded. At the heart of the mistake, it is sometimes said, is the way of thinking called pragmatism.

Reflection on the American mind, or habit of mind, is provoked by a spate of recent books. As veteran readers of these pages know, each summer I take with me to the family cottage in Quebec a bundle of readings, old or new, on a general theme. This year the theme was the American mind, and the books were mainly new. The most intellectually ambitious of them is Louis Menand's *The Metaphysical Club: A Story of Ideas in America.* Menand, who is professor of English at the City University of New York and contributing editor of the *New York Review of Books*, might have been tempted, with some justice, to use the definite article, *The* Story of Ideas in America. Centering on Oliver Wendell Holmes, William James, Charles Sanders Peirce, and John Dewey—with many fascinating intellectual excurses along the way—Menand presents the story of American ideas as the story of

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pragmatism. For reasons to be specified below, Peirce is, for the most part, outside the story line, and Menand finally leaves him out in the metaphysical cold. Holmes, as Menand admits, would never have called himself a pragmatist, and James uneasily wore the label because he was chiefly responsible for its currency. *The Metaphysical Club* (the title refers to a discussion group, established in Boston in 1872, to which several of the principles belonged) is, finally, the story of the triumph of the pragmatism of John Dewey. If Menand's story line does not hold together as firmly as he suggests, it must be admitted that no other story line depicting the American mind of the last century and more suggests itself as an alternative.

Casting the American mind back to the eighteenth-century founding, there is H. W. Brands' *The First American: The Life and Times of Benjamin Franklin*, and David McCullough's best-selling *John Adams*. There is also Joseph J. Ellis' *Founding Brothers*, which we have had previous occasion to discuss in connection with the question of truth and scholarship (see "The Tangled Web," November). Each of these books contributes to our understanding of the story of ideas in America, from the founding era and then, with Menand, from the Civil War up through the end of the Cold War. The ideas of the Puritan founding get short shrift, except as they bear, usually in indirect ways, on the formation of men such as Franklin and Adams. Whether these books, spanning the most influential public thought of more than two centuries, justify the claim that pragmatism is the story of ideas in America is a question very much worth considering. The claim is more believable if we entertain the possibility that there have been several pragmatisms in play over the years, frequently in conflict or uneasy coexistence, and that Dewey's pragmatism, far from being the culmination of this story of ideas, is an effort to lay a foundation other than the foundation, low but solid, laid in the beginning.

Franklin's Moral Algebra

I've done my bit of reading of and about Benjamin Franklin, and I confess that I have never warmed to him. There is not much on which I agree with D. H. Lawrence, but he was on to something in his reaction to the sayings of Franklin's Poor Richard, usually published under the title *The Way to Wealth*. Franklin comes across, said Lawrence, as a self-centered and dour grinder, a "snuff-colored little man." He read Franklin as a boy and, "I haven't got over those Poor Richard tags yet. I still rankle with them. It has taken me many years to get out of that barbed wire enclosure Poor Richard rigged up." In view of Lawrence's dissolute life outside the enclosure, we may have doubts about the wisdom of his rebellion. But many have rebelled against Franklin in a similar way and, although H. W. Brands does not remark it in his *The First American*, that rebellion against Franklin is very much like Franklin's rebellion against the moralistic oppressiveness of Cotton Mather in Boston, from which he fled as a boy. With respect to the mix of religion and morality, Franklin is a representative of what I have elsewhere described as "the narrow-escape syndrome." All his life long, every time he felt the encroachment of religious orthodoxy combined with moral rigor, he recoiled, lest he be caught again in the world of Cotton Mather from which he had narrowly escaped.

The First American is a big book of more than seven hundred pages, and by the end of it I found myself thinking more of Franklin than I had before. Considerably more. There is no doubt that his is an important part in the story of ideas in America. The variousness of his practical achievements amaze: he organized in Philadelphia the first lending library, the fire department, and an effective voluntary militia, in addition to his much more famous experiments with electricity. For his capturing of lightning and invention of the lightning rod, he was hailed in Europe and America as the greatest genius of his age (in France, along with Voltaire, of course). Reacting against the felt oppression of Puritan Boston, he became something of a rake, and later, during his many years as American commissioner to the court in Paris, something of a lecher. Early on he wrote *Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity*, in which he dismissed the idea of right and wrong, but he soon changed his mind, concluding that certain acts are right or wrong not because they are commanded or forbidden but "might be forbidden because they were bad for us, or commanded because they were beneficial to us." This led to his 1728 "Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion," which reads like a pragmatist tract written by Cato. For Franklin, Cato and other classical authorities were safe; they did not threaten his narrow escape from his boyhood Christianity.

Franklin was, in fact, an inveterate moralist. He could and he did write a half-whimsical essay advising young men on the advantages of taking an older woman as a mistress. He could be morally playful, but he certainly did not want to be thought morally frivolous. Brands writes: "Thus Franklin, having previously wandered from the pietistic moralism of his Boston upbringing to the agnostic—almost atheistic—amoralism of his [first time in London], now found his way to a pragmatic moralism that made man the measure of virtue rather than virtue the measure of man. . . . A more practical philosophy, or one better

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suited to success in tolerant but sober Philadelphia, was hard to imagine." Brands says this "settled the philosophical issue" for Franklin, and maybe he's right, but his own account indicates that Franklin kept tinkering with his ideas, laying out new plans for the conduct of his life, and sometimes making dramatic revisions, among them in his moral presuppositions.

On the boat back from London, in addition to speculating about the causes of the Gulf Stream, making astronomical observations, and studying the ontogeny of crustaceans, Franklin busied himself with devising four commandments for his life (be frugal, speak the truth, work hard, speak ill of no man), and twelve cardinal virtues necessary to keeping them (temperance, order, sincerity, justice, etc.). Number twelve was "Chastity," to which he appended the explanation, "Rarely use venery but for health or offspring; never to dullness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation." Chastity in moderation, so to speak. A Quaker friend who examined the list said, to Franklin's surprise, that some people thought him proud, so he added a thirteenth: "Humility. Imitate Jesus and Socrates." While he was almost perpetually involved in plans of self-improvement—at least until the later years when he laid back to enjoy his celebrity—he also thought it advisable that he accept limited imperfections in himself lest he be accused of "a kind of foppery in morals."

There was that smugness and complacency to which so many have reacted negatively. Having narrowly escaped from the Mathers of Boston, he was determined to live above the world of certainties and the contentiousness that too often attends them. His was the open-minded and universal view befitting the "scientific" disposition of an age of Enlightenment. He evidenced, writes Brands, "an equipoise that nearly everyone who knew him noticed and that many remarked upon. It could make him seem smug or shallow; while others agonized upon life's deep issues, Franklin contented himself with incomplete answers, maintaining an open mind and seeming to skate upon life's surface." The penchant for the scientific could lead him to the silliness of devising a complex system in which he weighed the pros and cons before making an important decision, assigning a certain mathematical weight, positive or negative, to each item and then arriving at the optimal decision by what he called "moral or prudential algebra."

The General and Particular Government of the Universe

Franklin's was a very superior mind, and he knew it. Because it was so very superior, most others did not mind his knowing it but, rather, took pleasure in celebrating his gifts, which were also theirs, for this was an age caught up in an exhilarating dream of progress of which genius was the engine. His discoveries about fire and heat led to the invention of a new kind of fireplace, the Franklin stove, which, as with his other inventions, he did not patent. He thought the invention should be free, being among his gifts to the age. He made his living as a printer, and everything else was gratis. He was not, says Brands, "what the modern age would call a true intellectual." He did have an endlessly inquisitive mind, and it was aimed at what might make life easier, more productive, or happier. "His view of science mirrored his view of religion. Where faith was sterile if it failed to produce good works, so science was sterile—even if interesting—if it failed to produce good inventions." Although the term would not come into philosophical use for more than a century, he was, in short, a pragmatist.

The same Franklin, however, cultivated a lifelong friendship with the celebrated British revivalist George Whitefield, who drew vast throngs by his rhetorical powers that could, it was said, reduce listeners to tears simply by uttering the word "Mesopotamia." Franklin organized the building of an arena in Philadelphia for Whitefield's rallies, since he was barred from the local pulpits. Franklin thought competition in religion a good thing, although there may have been more to it than that. In 1768 Franklin wrote Whitefield of his worries about British policies toward the colonies, a worry made more distressing by his deep devotion to Britain and aversion to the thought of conflict. In his letter he continued their theological debate of thirty years. "I see with you that our affairs are not well managed by our rulers here below; I wish I could believe with you that they are well attended to by those above." But, "though the general government of the universe is well administered, our particular little affairs are perhaps below notice, and left to take the chance of human prudence or imprudence, as either may happen to be uppermost." In the midst of anxieties, however, he wrote to another friend, "Take one thing with another, and the world is a pretty good sort of world; and 'tis our duty to make the best of it and be thankful." But to whom, or Whom, is it our duty to give thanks?

Franklin certainly flirted with atheism at times in his life, and still today is usually described as a Deist. When he was an old man, Ezra Stiles of Connecticut asked him about his religious convictions, in response to which Franklin penned what he called his creed. "I believe in one God, creator of the universe. That He governs it by His providence. That He ought to be

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worshiped. . . . That the soul of man is immortal, and will be treated with justice in another life respecting its conduct in this." As for Jesus, "his system of morals and his religion [are] the best the world ever saw or is likely to see. . . . I have, with most of the present Dissenters in England, some doubts as to his divinity; though it is a question I do not dogmatize upon, having never studied it, and think it needless to busy myself with it now, when I expect soon an opportunity of knowing the truth with less trouble." Franklin asked Stiles not to publish this letter, since it might scandalize the orthodox. One may suggest that its approximation of orthodoxy might rather scandalize the many, then and now, who assume that Franklin was a closet atheist who pretended in public to be a Deist.

At the early age of twenty-two, he wrote what Brands describes as "one of the most famous epitaphs in that lapidary genre."

The Body of
B. Franklin,
Printer;
Like the Cover of an old Book,
Its contents torn out,
And stript of its Lettering and Gilding,
Lies here, Food for Worms.
But the Work shall not be wholly lost,
For it will, as he believed, appear once more,
In a new & more perfect Edition,
Corrected and amended
By the Author.

So was Ben Franklin what John Dewey would call a pragmatist? Many have tried to make him into one, and there is certainly material there with which to work. If pragmatism means no more than practicality, Franklin was a pragmatist on all fours. But if it means, as it did with Dewey, a doctrine of inexorable progress, a denial of inherent conflict and of intrinsic good and evil in human affairs, and a religious devotion to the political process of democracy, then Franklin was of a very different spirit. Of course "democracy" was not a term favored by the Founders; indeed it was commonly thought to denote nothing more than mob rule. "Republic" was the favored term. Recall Franklin's famous answer to the matron who demanded to know what he and the other delegates had produced in their secret deliberations at the constitutional convention: "A republic, if you can keep it." But that republic was not for Franklin the embodiment of religious faith that democracy would be for Dewey. It was the best that could be managed under circumstances not of their choosing and not under their control.

"Unnecessary Prayers"

A merit of Brands' book is to underscore how very reluctant a revolutionary was Benjamin Franklin. He had a profound love for Britain and almost everything British, and, it is not too much to say, was heartbroken that King and Parliament did not understand that wiser policies could have kept America in the empire and enhanced its wealth and prestige many times over. He was in London as commissioner for the colonies, and labored mightily to resolve the disputes that, if exacerbated, would lead to the separation that he feared, and it was only when British politicians turned on him viciously and personally that he was forced to the realization that his love was, and would remain, unrequited. John Adams had a somewhat similar experience and opined, "Britain will never be our friend until we are her master." Which, more than two hundred years later, is pretty much how some would suggest things have turned out. At the time, however, Franklin did not share Adams' confidence in, or enthusiasm for, the great power that an independent America would become. He indulged in his share of the patriotic rhetoric required by the times, but for Franklin the Revolution was not a glorious crusade. It was more a matter of making the best of the hand that had been dealt.

To be sure, by the time revolution came, Franklin was a venerated sage and much older than the generation in the lead of prosecuting it and then consolidating its success in a new political order. He was an active participant in the constitutional convention and made crucial interventions (although perhaps not as many as Brands suggests, since McCullough and other historians attribute to Adams some initiatives with which Brands credits Franklin). But mainly Franklin, with his bald head, rough coat, benign countenance, and spectacles (he, by the way, also invented bifocals), was watching the unfolding of consequences he had not foreseen, but for which he bore considerable responsibility, and, all in all, he was pleased. He made proposals that were respectfully received but quickly shelved. For instance, he suggested that nobody in the executive branch should get paid, since this would inevitably lead to corruption. A younger generation—that would soon become the class of professional politicians that has been with us ever since—was understandably cool to that idea.

Then there was the matter of prayer at the constitutional convention. After a month in which the delegates had made little progress, Franklin wondered why, although they had searched history and examined other governments for guidance, they had not prayed. "How has it happened, sir, that we have

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not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of Lights to illuminate our understandings?" During the earlier Continental Congress, at the onset of the troubles with Britain, each day was begun with prayer. "Our prayers were heard, sir, and they were graciously answered. All of us who were engaged in the struggle must have observed the frequent instances of a superintending Providence in our favor. . . . Have we now forgotten that powerful Friend? Or do we imagine we no longer need assistance?" Franklin noted that he had lived to an old age. "And the longer I live the more convincing proofs I see of this truth, that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid?"

He cited the biblical text, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it," and added, "I firmly believe this." Without God's aid, "Our projects will be confounded, and we ourselves shall become a reproach and a by-word to future ages." Although it was seconded, Franklin's motion got nowhere. Hamilton and others worried that word would get out that the convention was praying, which would be interpreted as a sign of desperation, while Hugh Williamson of North Carolina observed that the convention lacked funds for paying a chaplain to lead the prayers. Franklin was amazed. At the bottom of the written copy of his speech, he wrote, "The convention, except three or four persons, thought prayers unnecessary!"

Earlier, while representing America in Paris, Franklin became worried about the number of European adventurers who entertained delusions about the fame and fortune awaiting them in the new nation. He wrote for such people a little tract in order to put things in perspective. "Though there are in that country few people so miserable as the poor of Europe, there are also very few that in Europe would be called rich. It is rather a happy mediocrity that prevails." Not that excellence is not pursued, and he cited the existence of nine colleges or universities and numerous academies. It is true, he said, that the several states employed many people, but most serve at personal sacrifice. "It is a rule established in some of the states that no office should be so profitable as to make it desirable." (As would become evident, that was more Franklin's rule than that of the political class aborning.) America was for people who understand the virtues associated with "happy mediocrity"—and perhaps not just mediocrity as defined economically.

"Industry and constant employment are great preservatives of the morals and virtue of a nation. Hence bad examples to youth are more rare in America, which must be a comfortable consideration to parents," he wrote. Comforting, too, was the liberty and tolerance afforded religion. "Atheism is unknown there, infidelity rare and secret, so that persons may live to a great age in that country without having their piety shocked by meeting with either an atheist or an infidel. And the Divine Being seems to have manifested His approbation of the mutual forbearance and kindness with which the different sects treat each other, by the remarkable prosperity with which He has been pleased to favor the whole country." There is a complacency and smugness that can be found in such sentiments, if that is what one is looking for. But there is also something like humility. To be sure, not necessarily the humility of Jesus and Socrates that the younger Franklin added as the thirteenth virtue. But a humility appropriate to an understanding of the limits of history and politics, and becoming to a nation that would, many years later, add "under God" to its pledge of allegiance in the hope of encouraging among its people an awareness that "'tis our duty to make the best of it and be thankful." Whether or not it should be called pragmatism, it is preferable to most ways of thinking about history and politics with which the world has been afflicted.

Jefferson in the Pantheon

The best-selling status of David McCullough's *John Adams* should come as no surprise. He's a fine writer with a solid record of mining rich veins of the American experience. Whole passages of his book on the building of the Brooklyn Bridge (*The Great Bridge*) came to mind every time I crossed it, driving toward the skyline from which rose, before September 11, the towers of the World Trade Center. His *Truman* flinched from facing the full horror of that President's decision in favor of the indiscriminate slaughter of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but it succeeded brilliantly in presenting a man in full, if fullness consists in being quintessentially an American. McCullough has said that he started out to write a dual biography of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, but finally decided to go with Adams, treating Jefferson only as he is part of the Adams story. And, of course, Jefferson is a big part of the story.

He made the right decision, I think, but then I am biased. I have never much cared for Jefferson, and have long protested the dominant role he has for so long been given in the telling of the American founding. That has been changing in recent years, with Jefferson taking his licks from one historian after another. I confess to being pleased with this turn. There may be just a touch of schadenfreude in my pleasure, but, if so, it is just a touch. I certainly take no pleasure in the apparent slanders of Jefferson, such as the claim he had a child by Sally Hemings, one of his

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slaves. That and similar libels are simply part of the politically correct campaign to discredit the Founders as yet another cabal of dead white men, and thereby to discredit the putatively oppressive political order that they produced. No, my aversion to Jefferson has different roots, and goes back to the time when he was, in the standard account of things, the reigning and unchallenged deity in the pantheon of founders.

On my first and only visit to Monticello, in the company of a friend who teaches at the University of Virginia (where it is compulsory to reverently lower one's voice when referring to "Mr. Jefferson"), I'm afraid I shocked both my friend and a guide who was within hearing distance by remarking on the boringly contrived house that befit an achingly enlightened and overproud Deist who presumed to rewrite the Gospels while, from his aristocratic haven, he cheered on distant revolutions in which common folk were massacred, all the time communing with his private and ever so superior muse as he penned paeans to liberty in indifference to the slaves at their sweated labor outside his window. Those may not have been the exact words I used, but they were words to that effect. To judge by the response, my observation was much like breaking wind in the temple. It was one of those times, and not the first time, that I probably should have bit my tongue.

McCullough's book is a biography of John Adams illumined by contrast with Thomas Jefferson. The contrast is not harshly drawn; McCullough is subtle but devastatingly effective. There is good, solid, straightforward, and honest Adams in his lifelong and loving partnership with Abigail. (It might be observed that McCullough did write a dual biography after all, a biography of John and Abigail. Although often separated, they were inseparable.) By way of contrast, there is Jefferson. There was no comparable bond of devotion and fidelity in his devious life. Because his teachings were subject to the changes of his fancy, he did not always live in contravention of what he taught. Jefferson wrote glowingly about the virtues of the yeoman farmer and warned against the corruption of cities, yet gave full rein to his self-indulgent tastes, and ran himself ever deeper into debt, when presented with the chance in London or Paris. "He relished all that Paris offered in the way of luxurious shopping, architecture, painting, music, theater, the finest food, the best wine, and the most cultivated society in his experience—never mind what he may have written about cities or the expenses he incurred."

Contrasting Modesties

Adams was never rich, and he and Abigail had to live very frugally at times, but he left a substantial inheritance. Jefferson, by contrast, died with debts exceeding $100,000, more than the value of Monticello, its land, and all his possessions, including his slaves. Among his contributions to the public character—about which he wrote so much, underscoring the indispensability of republican virtue—was the launching of the first state lottery in order to pay off his debts. It failed. McCullough writes, "In January 1827 on the front lawn of Monticello, 130 of Jefferson's slaves [he had freed only five in his will] were sold at auction, along with furniture and farm equipment. Finally, in 1831, after years of standing idle, Monticello, too, was sold for a fraction of what it had cost." One reason for Jefferson's later animus toward Britain is that the English were imprudent enough to give him loan after loan, and then impertinent enough to press for repayment. After its revolution of 1789, his beloved France was in no position to advance him money, and, knowing his improvidence, might not have done so if it could.

Jefferson composed his own epitaph and designed the stone obelisk that marks his grave at Monticello.

Here Was Buried
THOMAS JEFFERSON
Author of the Declaration of Independence,
Of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom,
And Father of the University of Virginia

Many have remarked on the modesty of it. There is no mention of his having been Governor of Virginia, Secretary of State, Vice President of the United States, or President of the United States. Perhaps it was modesty. Or perhaps it was that those offices had been and would be occupied by lesser mortals. Jefferson wanted to be remembered for what were singularly his achievements. (Even though his draft of the Declaration—a task to which Adams named him—was substantially rewritten by others at the Continental Congress.) As McCullough observes, he wanted to be remembered for his "creative work." He was, after all, an intellectual.

Adams did not write his own epitaph. He did, however, compose an inscription that was carved on the sarcophagus lid of Henry Adams, the first of the family to arrive in Massachusetts, in 1638.

> This stone and several others have been placed in this yard by a great, great, grandson from a veneration of the piety, humility, simplicity, prudence, frugality, industry, and perseverance of his ancestors in hopes of recommending an affirmation of their virtues to their posterity.

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The difference between that genuinely modest inscription and the obelisk at Monticello tells much about the difference between these two founders. Jefferson the intellectual was an enthusiast for the French Revolution, and was not deterred even by the bloodletting of the Great Terror. At the time, he praised "the sufficiency of human reason for the care of human affairs," and wrote to his fellow Americans, "Let us then, my dear friends, forever bow down to the general reason of society." The general reason of society, guiding what Rousseau would call "the general will," sometimes had a sharp and bloody edge, as with the guillotine. No matter to Jefferson. "The tree of liberty," he wrote, "must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is its natural manure." Human blood as manure; it is not an edifying image. At the height of the terror he wrote that he considered the Jacobins of France "as the same with the Republican patriots of America." Then, most chillingly, Jefferson, "whose personal philosophy was to get through life with the least pain possible," observes McCullough, "who shunned even verbal conflict," wrote this:

> The liberty of the whole earth was depending on the issue of the contest [in France]. . . . Rather than it should have failed, I would have seen half the earth desolated. Were there but an Adam and an Eve left in every continent, and left free, it would be better than it now is.

Jefferson Trembled

Years later, as July 4, 1826, the fiftieth anniversary of Independence, approached, the day on which both Jefferson and Adams would die, they were asked for a public statement. Jefferson complied with yet another radical rant, declaring that Independence would be "the signal of arousing men to burst the chains under which monkish ignorance and superstition had persuaded them to bind themselves." "All eyes are opened or opening to the rights of man," he wrote, once again identifying himself with the bloodstained slogan of the Jacobins. "The general spread of the light of science has already laid open to every view the palpable truth"—and here come the well-known Jeffersonian words—"that the mass of mankind has not been born with saddles on their backs, nor a favored few, booted and spurred, ready to ride them legitimately by the grace of God." But, of course, the words were not Jefferson's. He lifted them without attribution, as he had done before, from Richard Rumbold, Cromwell's lieutenant, who said on the scaffold, "I never could believe that Providence had sent a few men into the world, ready booted and spurred to ride, and millions ready saddled and bridled to be ridden." A difference, to be sure, is that Rumbold appealed to Providence, while Jefferson appealed to "the light of science." As I say, both Jefferson and Adams were asked for statements on this momentous anniversary. "I will give you," Adams said, "Independence forever!" Asked if he would not like to add something more, he replied, "Not a word."

Years after both men had left public office for many long years of retirement, they struck up an extended correspondence. Adams' letters, which were much more frequent, are marked by candor, a sense of gratitude and well-being, and a determination to set right the story of the founding, as best he remembered it. Jefferson, on the other hand, offered, along with the usual radical vaporings, a cautious, calculating, and often self-defensive account. To his credit, he did come around to a guarded apology for his earlier enthusiasm for the bloodletting in France. Much of the richness of McCullough's story is derived from his astute use of this correspondence, and especially of the letters from Adams. McCullough is never polemical, but the reader is left understanding well enough why he dropped the idea of a dual biography and decided to write about Adams, with only enough about Jefferson as the story required. At the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, we have all seen his words inscribed: "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever." One is left wondering whether the same reflection ever prompted him to tremble for Thomas Jefferson. God only knows. Certainly Thomas Jefferson left no evidence of it.

Pulling Down and Building

John Adams was, like Franklin, a reluctant revolutionary. In the sweltering, fly-infested Philadelphia of the summer of 1775, where dysentery had broken out and Adams, despite his rheumatism and fierce cold, was working twelve to fourteen hours a day as a chief mover, if not the chief mover, of the business of the Congress, he wrote to Abigail, who was herself recovering from severe illness. They must prepare themselves, he wrote, "minds and hearts for every event, even the worst." From when he first embraced the "Cause of America," he said, he thought the crisis would not be resolved peaceably, and this was the source of much "disquietude." "The thought that we might be driven to the sad necessity of breaking our connection with Great Britain, exclusive of the carnage and destruction which it was easy to see must attend the separation, always gave me a great deal of grief."

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In 1776, the appearance of Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* electrified the colonies, becoming, Adams said, the "common faith." (An anticipation of John Dewey's little book by that title a century and a half later?) While he recognized the impact of Paine's revolutionary enthusiasm, he was not taken in by it. Paine's understanding of government is "feeble," he wrote Abigail, and he "has a better hand at pulling down than building." Almost alone among members of the Congress, McCullough writes, Adams "saw no quick victory, but a long, painful struggle." This appreciation of what might be called the fragility and the tears of things stayed with Adams all his life. Years later, when France descended into its revolutionary paroxysm, he took the side of Burke and his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* against the likes of Paine, Jefferson, and his cousin Samuel Adams. To his cousin he wrote, "Everything will be pulled down. So much seems certain. But what will be built up? Are there any principles of political architecture? . . . Will the struggle in Europe be anything other than a change in impostors?"

One is most impressed by the fundamental decency and humanity of John Adams, and those qualities were most importantly formed and sustained by the abiding friendship with Abigail. Her words to Adams when the shape of a new government was being debated are frequently quoted by feminists: "If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation." Her letter went on in that vein, which McCullough describes as being not entirely serious. "In part, in her moment of springtime gaiety, she was teasing him. But only in part." Adams picked up on the teasing spirit, beginning his response with, "I cannot but laugh."

> Depend on it, we know better than to repeal our masculine systems. Although they are in full force, you know they are little more than theory. We dare not exert our power in its full latitude. We are obliged to go fair and softly, and in practice you know we are the subjects. We have only the name of masters, and rather than give up this, which would completely subject us to the despotism of the petticoat, I hope General Washington and all our brave heroes would fight.

Later, when Adams was forced to be absent, as was the case during long periods of their marriage (otherwise we would not have these marvelous letters), Abigail reflected on her responsibilities. Inflation was rampant, basic foodstuffs were scarce, and she was struggling not only to stay out of debt but to make improvements on the homestead. Adams deplored the fact that he was being of so little help to her. She wrote him in Philadelphia, "I believe nature has assigned each sex its particular duties and sphere of action, and to act well your part, 'there all the honor lies.'"

A Reprehensible Act

The great blot on Adams' later presidency, and on his character, has always been his signing of the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798. McCullough notes that he "had not asked for or encouraged" the acts. They "must be seen in the context of the time, and the context was tumult and fear." Long after, Adams wrote of the acts as "war measures." "I knew there was need enough of both, and therefore I signed them." McCullough adds, "Beyond that, the United States was at war—declared or not—and there were in fact numbers of enemy agents operating in the country." There were thousands of refugees from the French turmoil, and also the "wild Irish" refugees from the Irish Rebellion of 1798, many of them agitating against the policies of the new republic. As it turned out, Adams never invoked the Alien Act, which authorized deporting such troublemakers, but did close down, under the Sedition Act, some of the more strident newspapers. And, of course, the acts had the overwhelming support of the Congress and country. "Vice President Jefferson," McCullough notes, "having no wish to be present for the inevitable passage of the Sedition Act, or anything more that might take place in such an atmosphere, quietly packed and went home to Monticello." During most of the decisive conflicts of the nation's early years, Jefferson was abroad or taking refuge in Monticello.

Abigail, on the other hand, urged strong action upon her husband. "Yet daringly do the vile incendiaries keep up . . . the most wicked and base, violent and culminating abuse. Nothing will have effect until Congress passes a Sedition Bill," she wrote. McCullough says of the measures that they "were to be rightly judged by history as the most reprehensible acts of his presidency." But then, he finds little or nothing else in the Adams presidency to be reprehensible, so the distinction of being "the most reprehensible" is easily won. The Alien and Sedition Acts have long been fodder for the fury of civil libertarians, but, seen in the context of tumult and fear that then prevailed (a context not unlike our own after the attack of September 11), they appear as an instance of understandable excess in the country's long history of trying to balance the imperatives of liberty and security. In any event, they did little harm,

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and were quickly repudiated when the panic subsided. That being said, it must also be said that they were reprehensible, especially the Sedition Act.

Religion on Duty

In many textbook accounts, the American Founders were Deists or closet atheists who paid lip service to a Christian past that had been decisively displaced by Enlightenment rationalism. Hence the primacy of Jefferson in the founding pantheon. In a long delayed correction of that distorted version, recent years have seen a number of books accenting the Christian presuppositions that permeated the revolutionary period, along with the writing and ratification of the Constitution. McCullough does not make a big issue of it, and he is never argumentative, but in the early pages the reader is put on notice: "Adams was both a devout Christian and an independent thinker, and he saw no conflict in that. He was hard-headed and a man of 'sensibility,' a close observer of human folly as displayed in everyday life and fired by an inexhaustible love of books and scholarly reflection."

In 1779, Adams wrote the constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the oldest functioning written constitution in the world, and a major influence on the U.S. Constitution that would come almost a decade later. "The body-politic," declares the preamble, "is formed by a voluntary association of individuals. It is a social compact, by which the whole people covenants with each citizen, and each citizen with the whole people, that all shall be governed by certain laws for the common good." That compact theory is proposed against the horizon of a higher authority. The constitution does not mention freedom of religion, but affirms the "duty" of all people to worship "The Supreme Being, the great creator and preserver of the universe," and stipulates that no one is to be "hurt, molested, or restrained in his person, liberty, or estate for worshiping God in the manner most agreeable to the dictates of his own conscience." In other words, freedom is grounded in duty. This, although it is commonly forgotten, is also the logic of Madison's argument for religious freedom, which is premised upon a conscientious discernment of a "prior duty" to God that both precedes and transcends political allegiance.

Adams had no doubt that the central ideas in the founding had their provenance in Christianity. Equality was much in the air, and Adams wrote to a friend, "How the present age can boast of this principle as a discovery, as new light and modern knowledge, I know not." Equality was at the heart of Christianity, he said, rooted in the Golden Rule to love your neighbor as yourself. He thought it should be obvious that, when he wrote in the Massachusetts Declaration of Rights that "all men are by nature free and equal," he meant "not a physical but a moral equality." Similarly, eighteenth-century philosophers were much taken with the idea of the perfectibility of man, an idea that, "abstracted from all divine authority," Adams found entirely implausible.

> It is an idea of the Christian religion, and ever has been of all believers of the immortality of the soul, that the intellectual part of man is capable of progressive improvement forever. Where then is the sense of calling the perfectibility of man an original idea or modern discovery. . . . I consider the perfectibility of man as used by modern philosophers to be mere words without a meaning, that is mere nonsense.

Adams was not unappreciative of the age called Enlightenment. On the contrary, as he wrote to Jefferson near the end of their lives, he thought they had lived in the greatest of times that, for all its errors and vices, was "the most honorable" to human nature. "Knowledge and virtues were increased and diffused; arts, sciences useful to man, ameliorating [his] condition, were improved, more than in any period." Choosing his words carefully, perhaps in the hope that they might be acceptable to his skeptical correspondent, Adams proposed this bare-bones creed, "He who loves the Workman and His work, and does what he can to preserve and improve it, shall be accepted of Him."

A Policy Patched and Piebald

In contrast to Jefferson's dry Enlightenment principles, combined with ferocious flights of revolutionary rhetoric, Adams understood the history in which they had played their parts as a matter of human improvisation under a guiding Providence. Joseph Ellis writes: "As Adams remembered it, 'all the great critical questions about men and measures from 1774 to 1778' were desperately contested and highly problematic occasions. . . . Nothing was clear, inevitable, or even comprehensible to the soldiers in the field at Saratoga or the statesmen in the corridors at Philadelphia. 'It was patched and piebald policy then, as it is now, ever was, and ever will be, world without end.'" In Adams' view, writes Ellis, "they were making it up as they went along, improvising on the edge of catastrophe."

This sense of human fallibility under Divine guidance, of history as the mystery of God's unfolding purposes, contributed powerfully to one of Adams'

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most attractive characteristics, a profound humility before what man cannot understand. In Philadelphia, at the Congress in 1776, Adams attended, "led by curiosity and good company," a Catholic Mass, and his description of it is often quoted to show the anti-Catholic bias of the Protestant founders. But there was much more to it than that. The Mass at St. Mary's Church on Fifth Street was, writes McCullough, "an experience so singular that he reflected on it at length both in his journal and in a letter to Abigail." It could not have been more different from his lifetime of Sabbaths at Braintree's plain First Church where "unfettered daylight through clear window glass allowed for no dark or shadowed corners, or suggestion of mystery." "For the first time, Adams was confronted with so much that generations of his people had abhorred and rebelled against, and he found himself both distressed and strangely moved." The music, the ceremony, the candles, and incense were, Adams wrote, "so calculated to take in mankind" that he wondered how the Reformation had ever succeeded. He stayed through the long service, approved of the priest's sensible homily on the duties of parents to see to the temporal and spiritual interests of their children, and at the end found the whole experience was "awful and affecting"—the word "awful," of course, then meaning full of awe and conducive to reverence.

There was a similar experience in Paris. In 1785, Queen Marie Antoinette gave birth to a son and a Te Deum was offered in Notre Dame, with everybody there, including Louis XVI and his Queen, all the nobility, plus Jefferson, Adams, and young John Quincy Adams. John Quincy reports a similar experience of the "awful and affecting," this time with a sharp political lesson:

> . . . and as soon as his Majesty had got to his place and fallen upon his knees, they began to sing the Te Deum, which lasted half an hour, and in which we heard some exceeding fine music. . . . What a charming sight: an absolute king of one of the most powerful empires on earth, and perhaps a thousand of the first personages of that empire, adoring the divinity who created them, and acknowledging that He can in a moment reduce them to the dust from which they spring.

Politics Circumscribed

John Adams was a pragmatist, in the sense of being a practical man who adopted measures to desired ends, but he would have dismissed as nonsense the claim that the truth is what "works." When it came to fitting means to ends he was, one might say, the true skeptic. "It was patched and piebald policy then, as it is now, ever was, and ever will be, world without end." We are to love the Workman and do the best we can with His work, knowing that the only judgment to be trusted is His. Almost two centuries later, in 1954, the nation would add to the pledge of allegiance "under God." I expect that Adams would have approved, even as he might have been more than a little surprised and worried that such a fundamental truth was widely thought to have been forgotten.

While he was in Paris doing his best to pin down French support for America's struggle against Britain, Adams had occasion to ponder the luxury he saw all about him, and to contrast it with his circumstance and that of his nation aborning. That was the setting in which he wrote those oft-quoted words:

> I must study politics and war that my sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy. My sons ought to study mathematics and philosophy, geography, natural history, naval architecture, navigation, commerce, and agriculture in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music, architecture, statuary, tapestry, and porcelain.

From politics to porcelain, there is a hierarchy of goods, and it is consistent with his general view of the limits of politics—the limits of the good that politics can accomplish, and the limits of the claim that politics should make upon our attention. Not for Adams was Jefferson's thought of heaven being like the U.S. Senate in perpetual debate (even though Adams was, in this life, much more inclined to the give-and-take of political debate than Jefferson). The above reflection is unlike Adams, however, in that it would seem to anticipate a time when politics and conflict would be transcended by the finer things of life. More typically, Adams understood that politics and conflict, although they are of a lower order, would not disappear. Uncertain, unsatisfactory, and improvisational as the task of politics may be, so it ever was, and ever will be, world without end. That moment of Parisian reverie excepted, Adams, like Burke, was profoundly anti-utopian in his understanding of the necessity, the limits, and the fragility of the political task. In this, too, he exemplified what is variously admired or derided as American pragmatism.

Chance and Determinism

Fast forward a century and two, and we come to the story told by Menand in *The Metaphysical Club.* The

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period he intends to cover is from the end of the Civil War to the end of the Cold War. As mentioned earlier, his four representative figures are Oliver Wendell Holmes, Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, and John Dewey, all of whom are, not without considerable problems, included in the philosophical category labeled pragmatism. Menand has arguments to make, but he is above all a storyteller, and the stories he tells are, almost without exception, fascinating. When an argument gets in the way of a story, it is usually the argument that has to accommodate itself. Menand sees everything—philosophy, science, religion, mathematics, politics, wars, and personalities—connected to everything else, and is seldom able to resist pursuing the connections. For that the reader is grateful, since it results in numerous excurses that do, more or less and more often than not, eventually get back to the main story. In the afterword to the book he writes, "There was no part of the trek I did not find almost fatally fascinating, and (this is something I never thought I would say about writing a book) I am sorry it is over." This reader, for one, was also sorry when it was over.

In the mid- and late-nineteenth century, says Menand, the great issue was free will vs. determinism. He has great fun describing the breakthroughs in statistical theories as they touch on probability and order, and how various thinkers applied their implications to quite different, and sometimes conflicting, ends. The work of Charles Darwin was used by many to advance the argument for laissez-faire politics, laissez-faire economics, and even laissez-faire morality. "One reason for the relatively rapid acceptance of Darwin's theory of natural selection," Menand writes, "was that it seemed another example of order underlying chance." Similarly, the enthusiasm for statistics in economic behavior.

> Markets operate just the way nature does: left to themselves, they can be counted on to produce the optimum outcome over the long run. The individual pursuit of self-interest [as Adam Smith taught] conduces to aggregate efficiency. Of course, like all appeals to natural laws as a justification for human arrangements, the "discovery" of the laws reflected the arrangements to be justified. Nineteenth-century liberals believed that the market operated like nature because they had already decided that nature operated like a market.

Never mind Menand's jaundiced view of appeals to natural law; his description does help explain why Darwinism was, quite apart from its scientific merits or lack thereof, so readily embraced. As for Darwin's own intentions, they were not entirely scientific, according to Menand. "The purpose of *On the Origin of Species* was not to introduce the concept of evolution [which others had earlier espoused]; it was to debunk the concept of supernatural intelligence—the idea that the universe is the result of an idea." There were at the time, as there are today, thinkers prepared to accept the idea that progressive adaptation is simply the way that God selected to realize His intentions. They missed Darwin's point.

> What was radical about *On the Origin of Species* was not its evolutionism, but its materialism. Darwin wanted to establish something even his most loyal disciples were reluctant to admit, which is that the species—including human beings—were created by, and evolve according to, processes that are entirely natural, chance-generated, and blind. In order to do this, he had to do more than come up with a new set of scientific arguments. He had to develop what amounted to a new way of thinking.

There was very little science, in the usual sense of that term, in Darwin's argument. He did not document even one instance of natural selection in action. "Darwin gleaned his evidence for the inheritability of variations from domestic dog and pigeon breeding, which is intelligent selection par excellence. And since Darwin did not know the science of genetics, he was unable even to explain how characteristics get passed on." But his "new way of thinking" provided, in the view of many, the best hypothesis for accounting for what was known. Some adopted the newly fashionable hypothesis for reasons not entirely scientific. "He was a Darwinian for fun," wrote Henry Adams about Henry Adams in *The Education of Henry Adams*. Adams wrote: "One could not stop to chase doubts as though they were rabbits. One had no time to paint the surface of Law, even though it were cracked and rotten. For the young men whose lives were cast in the generation between 1867 and 1900, Law should be Evolution." Menand remarks of Darwinism that "its fitness was generally appreciated before its rightness was generally established" (assuming, as he does, that its rightness has been established). Thinkers such as Charles Peirce wanted to probe more deeply into questions such as whether the law of causation has a cause, and, correlatively, whether the law of evolution had itself evolved. Darwin was of little help here. As Menand tartly observes, "*On the Origin of Species* is actually silent on the question of origin."

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A Single Idea

The discussion of Darwinism and its reception is but one of Menand's many fascinating excurses or "treks." He explores numerous scientific, philosophical, and cultural highways and byways, including the complexities of the debates over the abolition of slavery leading up to the Civil War, in order to set the stage for the appearance of what would come to be called pragmatism. With that appearance, however, Menand's story line begins to fall apart; or, to put it differently, the several stories he tells so nicely fail to support what the book is presumably about, the story of pragmatism. He keeps trying to keep Holmes, James, Peirce, and Dewey in line, and they, just as persistently, keep going their own ways. In the preface (which, as with most books, was likely written after the main text), Menand indicates his awareness of this difficulty and settles for the claim that the four had in common an attitude toward ideas.

"If we strain out the differences, personal and philosophical, they had with one another, we can say that what these four thinkers had in common was not a group of ideas, but a single idea—an idea about ideas." That idea was, in turn, composed of four ideas. First, the idea that ideas are not "out there" to be discovered but are tools for coping with the world as it is. Second, ideas are not produced by individuals but are social. Third, ideas do not develop by their inner logic but are entirely dependent upon their human carriers. Fourth, since ideas are responses to particular circumstances, they survive not because they are immutably true but because of their adaptability. Such is Menand's effort to tie together the four very different protagonists of his story. Acknowledging those differences, as he regularly does, Menand nonetheless refers to "their philosophy" in the singular, and the name he gives that philosophy is pragmatism.

In fact, all four disliked the term. Holmes, for good reason, never described himself as a pragmatist. James inadvertently gave the term currency because he wanted to acknowledge his debt to Peirce, and that was the term he thought Peirce had used. James preferred "humanism." Peirce himself called his philosophy "pragmaticism," in the hope that such an ugly word would not easily be hijacked by others. Dewey privately said he rejected the term, but recognized that he was publicly stuck with it, and so made the most of it. What most writers mean by pragmatism today, as both a philosophy and intellectual attitude, is mainly associated with Dewey. In a secondary and very ambiguous way, James may be viewed as a pragmatist; Peirce's relationship to the term is essentially antagonistic; and it fits Holmes hardly at all. Menand's references to "their philosophy" in the singular is the chief instance of his argument giving way in order to accommodate the telling of his story. At points in the story, Menand recognizes as much:

> Pragmatism seems a reflection of the late-nineteenth-century faith in scientific inquiry—yet James introduced it in order to attack the pretensions of late-nineteenth-century science. Pragmatism seems Darwinian—yet it was openly hostile to the two most prominent Darwinists of the time, Herbert Spencer and Thomas Huxley; it was designed, in James' version, to get God back into a picture many people felt Darwin had written Him out of; and it had nothing in common. . . with the eugenics movement, which was based on the work of Darwin's cousin, the statistician Francis Galton. Pragmatism seems to derive from statistical thinking—but many nineteenth-century statisticians were committed to principles of laissez-faire that James and Dewey did not endorse, and many turn-of-the-century statisticians (Galton was one of the most renowned) were committed to ideas of race-building and social engineering that are alien to everything James and Dewey wrote. Pragmatism shares [Ralph Waldo] Emerson's distrust of institutions and systems, and his manner of appropriating ideas while discarding their philosophical foundations—but it does not share his conception of the individual conscience as a transcendental authority.

Pragmatisms in the Plural

Dewey presumably inherited the mantle of pragmatism from James, but halfway through his very long life (1859-1952) he stopped doing serious philosophy and devoted himself to grand schemes of educational and social reform. James was of a very different spirit. "I am against bigness and greatness in all their forms," he wrote, "and with the invisible molecular moral forces that work from individual to individual, stealing in through the crannies of the world like so many soft rootlets." Bigness, success, and grand schemes for reform result, he said, in mendacity, hollowness, and brutality. He favored, rather, "the eternal forces of truth which always work in the individual and in an immediately unsuccessful way, underdogs always, till history comes, after they are long dead, and puts them on the top."

Menand puts it this way: "James' pragmatism was not a philosophy for policy makers, muckrakers, and social scientists. It was a philosophy for misfits, mystics,

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and geniuses—people who believed in mental telepathy, or immortality, or God. James was never able to believe unreservedly in any of those things himself; but to the end of his life, he tried." James would not, I think, have put mental telepathy in the same category as immortality, never mind God (although he did ask his brother Henry to stay around for six weeks after he died to see whether he, William, could communicate with him from "the other side"). Nor would he refer to such mysteries as dismissively as does Menand. Nor would he recognize himself in this sentence: "James and Dewey described a universe still in progress, a place where no conclusion is foregone and every problem is amenable to the exercise of what Dewey called 'intelligent action.'" A universe still in progress? Yes, James hoped so. Where no conclusion is foregone? Not quite. He decisively decided against meaninglessness and in favor of free will and transcendent ends. Every problem is amenable to intelligent action? Emphatically no. That was Dewey, not James—and certainly not Peirce or Holmes. (It is worth noting that, as Menand gets farther along with his story, Peirce and Holmes tend to drop out. It winds down into being more and more a story about "James and Dewey," and finally about Dewey.)

Menand knows the great differences between his protagonists, and even has a chapter titled "Pragmatisms" in the plural. But even at the end of that chapter he speaks of pragmatism in the singular as "a school of thought." The two great deficiencies of that school of thought, he says, are, first, that it takes interests for granted without asking where they come from or how we determine whether they are worth pursuing. "We form beliefs to get what we want, but where do we get our wants?" Second, he observes, history is made by people for whom ideas are things other than "instruments of adjustment." "Pragmatism explains everything about ideas except why a person would be willing to die for one." That is probably true of Dewey, although it should be noted that he supported America's engagement in two world wars, and gave reasons for his support. Whether his reasons were drawn from his philosophy, or even consistent with it, is another matter.

Of Menand's four, Oliver Wendell Holmes stands out for his impatience with what is generally meant by philosophy. He did as a young man, in 1876, write to Emerson, then in his dotage, that "the law opens a way to philosophy as well as anything else, if pursued far enough, and I hope to prove it before I die." But Holmes had given up on any hope for what he called "a glimpse of the infinite," and contented himself with arguing for the dignity of professionalism (which he sometimes called "jobbism") in getting on with the task at hand. "If one does one's job as well as one can one achieves a practical altruism, and it doesn't matter so much how one feels about it," he wrote to a friend. Or, for that matter, how it fits into the great scheme of things, if there is a great scheme of things. Deal with the facts and the big picture will take care of itself, "for every fact leads to every other by the path of the air." Alone of the four, Holmes had fought in the Civil War and bore the scars in both body and mind. "The lesson Holmes took from the war can be put in a sentence," writes Menand. "It is that certitude leads to violence." He was averse to causes of whatever political or ideological stripe. Late in his very long life (1841-1935), he wrote to his friend Harold Laski, "Some kind of despotism is at the bottom of seeking for change."

In the course of his story, Menand highlights nicely the ways in which a deeply conservative Holmes was, especially when he reached the Supreme Court, lionized by liberals who misunderstood him, and how Holmes, enjoying the attention, was not eager to correct the misunderstanding. Along with Dewey, Holmes had slight interest in individual rights; for both of them the claims of the collective were trump. For the progressivist Dewey, this led to socialism in politics and public policy, while for Holmes it meant being a "realist" in working the system and resisting any dramatic jolts to it. Holmes' philosophy of law was that law does not operate by philosophy. The good lawyer, meaning the successful lawyer, is concerned only about knowing how the judge will rule. The first sentence of his first law review article, in 1870, is still famous today: "It is the merit of the common law that it decides the case first and determines the principle afterwards." He spent the rest of his life trying to explain why this does not mean that legal decision making is arbitrary, as have many professors of jurisprudence since. Holmes' pragmatism, if that is the right term, was practicality with a vengeance. It is not surprising that he and his old friend William James drifted apart. He attended James' funeral in 1910, but privately made clear his lack of sympathy for James' thought, claiming that he had made uncertainty an excuse for believing in more than the facts at hand. Of James he caustically remarked, "His wishes made him turn down the lights so as to give miracle a chance."

American Aristotle

Charles Sanders Peirce was by far the most penetrating and ambitious thinker of the four whose stories Menand tells. There is today something of a revival of interest in Peirce, as described in Edward Oakes' "Discovering the American Aristotle" (FT, December 1993). His thought, to which James

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attributed his inspiration and for which Holmes had no use, will likely always remain a cultivated taste, however, not least because the shambles of his personal and professional life precluded his ever publishing a book. Peirce's father, Benjamin, was a Harvard mathematician who believed that the world is constructed to be known by the mind—"the two are wonderfully matched," he insisted—and Charles agreed, but with a difference. He rejected the earlier and scientistic "billiard-ball theory" of matter (which as promoted in the mid-nineteenth century sometimes sounds eerily like the "chaos theory" that was so popular only a few years ago), insisting that the universe is charged with indeterminacy and, at the same time, is intelligible. Words such as "cause" and "effect" do not denote fixed characteristics or entities but are to be understood within a "logic of relations" intricately connected with his theory of language as signs. In a pervasively relativistic world, however, Peirce was no relativist, insisting as he did on the possibility of making statements that are true (without quotation marks).

The mistake of nominalism, going all the way back to William of Ockham in the fourteenth century, was not, Peirce wrote, in its insistent devotion to the particular rather than the universal, but in its reliance on individual rather than communal perception. No individual mind is capable of accurate and objective knowledge; no two astronomers, or even one astronomer on different days, perceive the same star in the same way, yet that does not throw into question the reality of the star. Complete certainty about the position of the star requires an infinite number of observations. "But," Menand remarks, "Peirce was not in a hurry." Peirce wrote, "The personal prejudices or other peculiarities of generations of men may postpone indefinitely an agreement in this opinion, but no human will or limitation can make the final result of an investigation to be anything else than that which it is destined to be. The reality, then, must be identified with what is thought in the ultimate true opinion. . . . The opinion which is fated to be ultimately agreed to by all who investigate is what we mean by the truth, and the object represented in this opinion is the real." What Menand barely hints at, however, is that, for Peirce, there is one who possesses this ultimate true opinion, this final knowledge, namely, God. Menand's final, and somewhat dismissive, comment is, "Peirce's pragmatism has the Midas touch," by which I take him to mean that, in Peirce's view, all human inquiry finally becomes theology. Put differently, Menand's definition of pragmatism resists any sense of ending; everything is everlastingly open-ended; and, by that definition, it is doubtful that Peirce was a pragmatist.

"Holmes, James, Peirce, and Dewey were modernists," Menand writes; "the eventual obsolescence of their work would hardly have shocked them. Even Peirce, who did not share with the others a belief in the pure provisionality of ideas, thought that the opinions of one generation were destined to be superseded by the opinions of the next." Well, yes and no. As Oakes points out, Peirce was somewhat more ambitious than that. "[I intend] to make a philosophy like that of Aristotle," he wrote, "that is to say, to outline a theory so comprehensive that, for a long time to come, the entire work of human reason, in philosophy of every school and kind, in mathematics, in psychology, in physical science, in history, in sociology, and in whatever other department there may be, shall appear as the filling of its details." So much for ideas as being very much like the invention of forks, things useful for achieving the purpose at hand.

The task of the philosopher, as Peirce understood it, is not to invent what is useful but to discover what is true, although the invention of the useful is part of the process of discovery. Nominalism, followed by Descartes, followed by Kant, followed by Freud, and by innumerable others throws us back upon what we work out in our heads, what we invent. Peirce worried that James, too, was slipping into subjectivism with his pragmatism understood as what "works." Against all that, Peirce was an adamant realist. There really are laws of nature that we can discover, and they really do govern nature, and we can discover them because law, nature, and mind are "wonderfully matched." Michael Raposa, a leading Peirce scholar, puts it this way:

> These laws can be regarded as "ideas" only because the universe itself is of the nature of a Mind, a vast representamen or argument "working out its conclusions in living realities." The nominalist, however, would make the human mind the author rather than the reader or interpreter of the "book of nature." Nominalist principles render scientific inquiry farcical, Peirce contended, by dissolving the reality of those general laws that it is the task of the scientist to *discover*. If the world's generality, its intelligibility, is solely the product of human intellect, then the fundamental purpose of theoretical science cannot be, as Peirce had stipulated, to acquire knowledge of "God's truth." Clearly, Peirce's theism, in addition to and as an ingredient of his philosophy of science, supplied an important incentive in his battle for the cause of realism.

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Dewey as Theologian

Of the four figures examined, it is finally only John Dewey who comfortably fits the notion of pragmatism in Menand's "story of ideas in America." Of course, there are important overlappings in the thought of the four. Like Peirce, for instance, Dewey discounted the powers of the individual. Empiricists counted up the preferences, interests, and perceptions of individuals in order to arrive at the social will, but that, said Dewey, is to get things exactly backward. "Society in its unified and structural character is the fact of the case; the non-social individual is an abstraction arrived at by imagining what man would be if all his human qualities were taken away. Society, as a real whole, is the normal order, and the mass as an aggregate of isolated units is the fiction." Unlike Peirce, however, Dewey stopped with society. He did not press on to the Mind of the universe that is God.

Put differently, it is not too much to say that, for Dewey, Society is God. And because democracy is the necessary form for the advance of society, Democracy is God. Toward the very end of his story, Menand says that the pragmatism he has been describing underwrites "the theory that democracy is the value that validates all other values. Democratic participation isn't the means to an end, in this way of thinking; it is the end." Here "the end" is to be taken very seriously, as in the final *telos*, the ultimate object of devotion. As we shall see, Dewey made this quite explicit in his little book of 1934, *A Common Faith* (which for some reason is not mentioned by Menand, although it could hardly be more pertinent to his story). And it is quite explicit in the thought of Richard Rorty, who is today's most prominent claimant to the mantle of Dewey, as I have discussed in "The Gods of Left and Right" (FT, March 1999).

In an older tradition, philosophy begins in wonder; with Dewey and many other moderns, philosophy stops at the edge of wonder. Although Menand does not mention it, "pragmatism" had an accepted meaning before there was a school of thought by that name. The first definition of pragmatism offered by the *OED* is "officiousness, pedantry." In 1863, Cowden Clarke wrote of a Shakespeare character, "He is a moral teetotaler, a formalist, a pragmatist." Pragmatism connoted littleness of mind, a failure of imagination, an inclination to the safe and smug. It is a disposition represented in aspects of Dewey's thought. Menand writes: "Dewey thought that ideas and beliefs are the same as hands: instruments for coping. An idea has no greater metaphysical stature than, say, a fork. When your fork proves inadequate to the task of eating soup, it makes little sense to argue about whether there is something inherent in the nature of forks or something inherent in the nature of soup that accounts for the failure. You just reach for a spoon." Precisely.

In 1894, Dewey had been much impressed by—Menand describes it as almost a conversion experience—the teaching of Jane Addams, the founder of Hull House in Chicago, that conflicts of interest are finally "unreal."

> His strategy was to promote, in every area of life, including industrial life, democracy, which he interpreted as the practice of "associated living"—cooperation with others on a basis of tolerance and equality. He hoped that in the long run this would lead to a more just order. The hope had its philosophical justifications, which Dewey spent his career trying to spell out. But it was also the expression of a singularly irenic personality. He had taken Addams' teaching to heart: that antagonism is unnecessary, that it is based on a misunderstanding of one's best interests, and that it leads to violence.

The antagonism between truth and falsehood, virtue and vice, good and evil, is finally illusory. Such things do not exist "out there." They are ideas and ideas are tools; if ideas are not functional, there are plenty more where they came from. If your fork is not doing the job that is at hand to be done, reach for a spoon. Put so bluntly, one may end up with a caricature of Dewey's philosophy, but it is not, I think, a caricature by much. "Philosophy recovers itself," he wrote in an influential 1917 essay, "when it ceases to be a device for dealing with the problems of philosophers and becomes a method, cultivated by philosophers, for dealing with the problems of men." One might observe, however, that the problems of philosophers *are* the problems of men when men are philosophers.

When Truth Is Not the Problem

Dewey was delighted with G. K. Chesterton's complaint that "pragmatism is a matter of human needs, and one of the first of human needs is to be something more than a pragmatist." Chesterton's complaint, thought Dewey, only confirms pragmatism's most basic claim, namely, that what people choose to believe is just what they think it is good to believe. Chesterton had, in his view, perfectly closed the circle. But, of course, Dewey missed the point. The human need, according to Chesterton (along with Peirce, James, and most of the history of philosophy), is not to choose an agreeable belief but

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to discover the truth. Or, as St. Augustine put it centuries earlier, the human need is not to be deceived about how things stand with the world. For Dewey such concerns were outside the province of philosophy defined as a method "for dealing with the problems of men" for whom truth is not a problem.

Dewey was no fool. Unless one agrees with the Psalmist that the fool is one who says in his heart, and in innumerable publications, that there is no God. He was in many respects a wise, and certainly an eminently decent, man, who in the course of a long life probably had a greater influence on social reform than any other American intellectual. That is the argument persuasively made in Robert B. Westbrook's fine 1991 study, *John Dewey and American Democracy* (see "The Real John Dewey," Public Square, January 1992). While Dewey's socialism is now discredited, and his educational theories are regularly pilloried (and not only by conservatives), it is as a public intellectual and social reformer, and not as a philosopher, that he has left his mark on our common life. *The Metaphysical Club* is a brilliant book by many measures, but the thought of James and Peirce does not converge and culminate, as Menand suggests, in John Dewey and his legacy. Holmes better fits the story line of pragmatism's belief in ideas as tools, although he seemingly did not share Dewey's driving—and, for all his intelligence, naive—faith in democracy and progress.

In the larger picture, when people speak, either in praise or derision, of the American mind as "pragmatic," John Dewey is more the anomaly than the norm. Franklin, Adams, Madison, and others who shaped the American mind were pragmatic in the sense that they were exceedingly practical and attentive to the ways in which the world actually works. They were very modest in their claims to understanding or control, trusting in a Providence who ineluctably worked His purposes through history. With few exceptions that trust was explicitly Christian, always it bore the unmistakable stamp of Christian faith. Lincoln is probably the best exemplar of this combination of practicality and reverence, which is why he has been called, with considerable justice, the greatest theologian of the American experience. Dewey, too, enjoined modesty, and in his personal life he practiced it. His philosophy, however, while seemingly modest, was in many ways an exercise in hubris. Chesterton famously said that the problem with a man who won't believe in God is not that he will end up believing in nothing but that he will end up believing in anything. To which I would add that he may end up believing that he is God. Or, in Dewey's case, that "we" are God. Which brings us back to *A Common Faith*, delivered as the Terry Lectures at Yale.

The Religious versus Religion

Dewey understood that human beings are naturally religious. The problem is with religion. The first chapter of the little 1934 book offers a summary of his thinking and is titled, "Religion versus the Religious." If the religious can be liberated from its captivity to religion, "the religious aspect of experience will be free to develop freely on its own account." Catholics, Orthodox, and Protestants (Dewey has little to say about non-Christian religion) "agree on one point: the necessity for a Supernatural Being and for an immortality that is beyond the power of nature." Atheists who reject such beliefs agree with those who accept them on the "identification of the religious with the supernatural." That is the identification that Dewey challenges. His proposal is against religion, with its supernatural trappings, and in favor of the religious. He intends to set forth a way to be religious after the death of God.

He knows that some of the tough-minded will criticize him for advocating "a timid halfway position," "a view entertained from mere tendermindedness, as an emotional hangover from childhood indoctrination, or even as a manifestation of a desire to avoid disapproval and curry favor." But he will not be deterred by such criticism. He makes more than amply clear that he is keenly aware of the fear, superstition, authoritarianism, and narrowness of religion which lead many to reject not only religion but also the religious. His proposed "common faith" is very different:

> It trusts that the natural interactions between man and his environment will breed more intelligence and generate more knowledge provided the scientific methods that define intelligence in operation are pushed further into the mysteries of the world, being themselves promoted and improved in the operation. There is such a thing as faith in intelligence becoming religious in quality—a fact that perhaps explains the efforts of some religionists to disparage the possibilities of intelligence as a force. They properly feel such faith to be a dangerous rival.

On the one side are the devout adherents of "intelligence in operation," and on the other are the religionists. Such intelligence is not mere rationalism, but includes moral aspiration. At another point he writes, "I should describe this faith as the unification of the self through allegiance to inclusive ideal ends, which imagination presents to us and to which the human will responds as worthy of controlling our

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desires and choices." This faith is committed not to any particular subject matter of belief but simply to "the method of intelligence." Here Dewey admits the term "God," provided that it denotes not a Being or anything supernatural but "the unity of all ideal ends arousing us to desire and action." The doctrines and dogmas of religion are simply no longer believable, and, in addition—here he follows in the tradition of Ludwig Feuerbach and others—are revealed as projections of our fears and hopes. Such doctrines and dogmas are quite unnecessary.

> The reality of ideal ends and values in their authority over us is an undoubted fact. The validity of justice, affection, and that intellectual correspondence of our ideas with realities that we call truth is so assured in its hold upon humanity that it is unnecessary for the religious attitude to encumber itself with the apparatus of dogma and doctrine.

He does not insist upon using the word "God," and he knows its association with religion can lead to misunderstandings. But there are forces in nature and society that generate and support our ideals, which are further unified by intelligent action that gives them solidity and coherence. "It is this *active* relation between ideal and actual to which I would give the name 'God.' A clear and intense conception of a union of ideal ends with actual conditions is capable of arousing steady emotion. It may be fed by every experience, no matter what its material." That is the doctrine that, according to Dewey, needs no doctrine, the experience of the religious that he posits against religion. It is, one might observe, the non-church church of those committed to "intelligence in action," a faith sustained and transmitted without myth or liturgy, requiring no priestcraft except the professoriat, open to all who think clearly, and recognizing no excommunicatable sin except offense against what is defined as intelligence.

The atheist is lacking in natural piety, says Dewey, leading to the isolation of man in the universe or, alternatively, to man becoming the object of worship. References to "God" and the "divine" keep our devotion centered on the active relation between the ideal and actual, remembering that the ideal, the actual, and the relation between them suggest nothing beyond man and nature. There is even a kind of eschatology in this proposed common faith: "Religion would then be found to have its natural place in every aspect of human experience that is concerned with estimate of possibilities, with emotional stir by possibilities as yet unrealized, and with all action in behalf of their realization. All that is significant in human experience falls within this frame."

His Critique of Liberal Protestantism

Dewey recognized that liberal Protestantism had for a long time been moving in the direction he espoused, but it still refused to cut the Gordian knot with the supernatural. Under the pressure of scientific rationality, liberal religion subscribed to a dualism of prose as distinct from poetry, of fact as distinct from value. This is fine as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. "The general mind is thus left in a confused and divided state. The movement that has been going on for the last few centuries will continue to breed doubleness of mind until religious meanings and values are definitely integrated into normal social relations." Dewey is very much a monist, against all dualisms and against any eschatological deferral of the absolute and discontinuous realization of possibilities. All that ever was, is, or ever will be is integrated into us in our social relations—is, in sum, what we are and will be by participating in the active relation between ideal and actual.

In his final lecture, Dewey explains why, were his common faith commonly adopted, it would not necessarily mean an end of religions:

> The transfer of idealizing imagination, thought, and emotion to natural human relations would not signify the destruction of churches that now exist. It would rather offer the means for a recovery of vitality. The fund of human values that are prized and that need to be cherished, values that are satisfied and rectified by *all* human concerns and arrangements, could be celebrated and reinforced, in different ways and with differing symbols, by the churches. In that way the churches would indeed become catholic.

Dewey is pleased that liberal churches are becoming more this-worldly, "that they take a more active interest in social affairs, that they take a definite stand upon such questions as war, economic injustice, political corruption, that they stimulate action for a divine kingdom on earth"—all this is "one of the signs of the times." But now they must take the decisive step of dropping any claims to having a special relationship to the supernatural or to "the supreme values and motivating forces" of human action. Such claims "make it impossible for the churches to participate in promotion of social ends on a natural and equal human basis." For Dewey, any hint of inequality is a heresy against a core article of the creed of the

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common faith, namely, democracy. "I cannot understand," he wrote, "how any realization of the democratic ideal as a vital moral and spiritual ideal in human affairs is possible without surrender of the conception of the basic division to which supernatural Christianity is committed." And in the Church of Intelligent Action, what John Dewey can or cannot understand is a matter of great doctrinal moment, for his authority is by no means equal.

What We Most Prize

A Common Faith is in many ways a thoughtful reflection, and much of what Dewey says should surely be accepted. Although the polemical use of stereotypes is unattractive, a critique of religious authoritarianism, of superstition, of anti-intellectual fideism, and of individualistic revivalism is always in order. Nor can one object to his insistence that every dimension of life should be made vital by a sense of "the religious." Moreover, his vibrant humanism should strike a responsive chord in orthodox Christians who believe that God became man, and it is not possible to be more humanistic than that. Dewey's concluding coda is not untouched by grandeur:

> The things in civilization we most prize are not of ourselves. They exist by grace of the doings and sufferings of the continuous human community in which we are a link. Ours is the responsibility of conserving, transmitting, rectifying, and expanding the heritage of values we have received that those who come after us may receive it more solid and secure, more widely accessible and more generously shared than we have received it. Here are all the elements for a religious faith that shall not be confined to sect, class, or race. Such a faith has always been implicitly the common faith of mankind. It remains to make it explicit and militant.

Dewey's identification of "God" with the human project has some resonance with a deeply Christian understanding of incarnation, the crucial difference being that Christians believe that God became man and, therefore, while a man, Jesus the Christ, is God, man—not even in his participation in the active relation between the ideal and the actual—is not God. Atheists who signed the Humanist Manifesto of 1933 and thought Dewey was one of them were outraged by his affirmation of "God" and the "divine." Dewey assured them that he was keeping the faith, as it were, but thought it wise to make concessions to such terminology in order to have his common faith more commonly accepted. More touching, as Westbrook describes, is the number of liberal Protestant theologians who pleaded with Dewey to withdraw, or at least temper, his criticisms of them, assuring him that they meant nothing more by "God" than he did. They were, they insisted, innocent of the charge of believing in the supernatural or anything transcending the human. Dewey was pleased to receive their assurances, although he remained somewhat skeptical. That theologians feared being excommunicated by John Dewey tells us much about both the stature of Dewey and the state of theology at a peculiar moment of what was taken to be the mainline "story of ideas in America."

It is a weakness in Menand's otherwise brilliant telling of that story that he ends with everything converged and conflated in John Dewey. Where William James, and especially Charles Sanders Peirce, cannot be accommodated within that story line, their deviations—and they are many and important—are usually briefly mentioned and quickly dropped. And even in the treatment of Dewey, the more ambitious reaches of his thought are not explored and, as in the case of *A Common Faith*, are not even briefly mentioned. Dewey, to his credit, understood that his devotion to liberal democracy, the note on which Menand ends, entailed a radical break in the story of ideas in America. His protests notwithstanding, he was proposing not just a new appreciation of "the religious" but a new religion. To his chagrin, most Americans already had a religion and so declined his proposal. Toward the end of his story, as we have noted, Menand says that for pragmatism "democratic participation isn't the means to an end; in this way of thinking, it is the end." He then adds the cautionary note, "Whether this nineteenth-century way of thinking really does have twenty-first-century uses is not yet clear."

In Times of Testing

That "nineteenth-century way of thinking," one may note, extended far into the twentieth century, and in Dewey's version of liberal democracy as a religion still holds sway today over large sectors of American thought and sensibility. Dewey claimed that this way of thinking was "implicitly the common faith of mankind" that he only wanted to make "explicit and militant." But from his Terry Lectures and other writings, we know that he understood the novelty of his proposal. His pragmatism was not the pragmatism of others associated with the philosophy that goes by that name, and certainly not the pragmatism of intellectual modesty and commonsensical practicality that—Jefferson and a few others excepted—marked

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the American founding. That was a pragmatism that, as Leo Strauss understood, built on foundations low but solid. In the understanding of men such as Franklin and Adams, the institutions of the republic, of what is now called liberal democracy, do not require a full account of the human circumstance, never mind the nature of reality. It is required only that they be adequate to political purposes, and politics does not include "those things in civilization we most prize."

The government the Founders designed requires arguments in its defense, but those arguments are not and cannot be supplied by the government. Such arguments come from elsewhere. In this sense, in contrast to the monism of John Dewey, the Founders were unapologetic dualists, or even pluralists. The Religion Clause of the First Amendment represents something utterly unprecedented; never before in history had a regime adopted the self-denying ordinance that denied it a role in controlling the reasons by which it was morally legitimated. Such reasons—essentially religious in character, as Dewey well understood—usually remain in the background, implicit rather than explicit. But in times of great testing, they move to the fore and become the matter of the most earnest public debate. The disagreement over slavery was one such time, and then the civil debate descended into civil war. Disagreements over abortion, the biotechnical redesign of humanity, and who belongs to the community for which we accept common responsibility represent another such time of testing. And now, after September 11, the clash of civilizations forces a greater public explicitness about the values and truths, more often than not Christian in their provenance and continuing force, that define our side in this contest.

Had Dewey's religion of liberal democracy been democratically accepted, we would be having a very different kind of argument. But it was not, and is not ever likely to be. Menand wisely subtitles his book "a story of ideas in America" rather than *the* story. To the extent that his story ends up being the story of John Dewey, he is describing an aberrant moment in the story of ideas in America, although the hold of that moment is by no means entirely broken even today. When people speak, whether in praise or derision, of the American mind as pragmatic, the chief reference should be to those who, like Franklin and Adams, built on foundations low but solid, and to the history of a nation that has been, all in all, remarkably successful in maintaining a constitutional order that is accountable to transcendent reality but does not presume to supply the truths about that reality by which the order is both justified and judged. Contra *A Common Faith* and religious devotion to democratic participation as a final end—which, in an older vocabulary, is nothing less than idolatry—the genius of a worthier tradition of pragmatism in America is rooted in the recognition of an embarrassingly elementary but regularly forgotten truth, namely, that we are not God.

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A FAMILIAR BEAST

David I. Kertzer's second attack volume is out, *The Popes Against the Jews: The Vatican's Role in the Rise of Modern Anti-Semitism* (Knopf). The first, it may be remembered, beat up on the nineteenth-century Pope Pius IX who adopted and reared a Jewish boy who had been taken from his parents because he had been baptized at a time when it was against the law for Christians to be reared by Jews. We will have a review of the new volume in due course, but suffice it for the moment that Kertzer, professor of history at Brown University, has discovered (brace yourself) that popes of the nineteenth and the first part of the twentieth century sometimes shared and expressed the negative view of Jews that was nearly all-pervasive in the Europe of that time. Moreover, some popes did not censure but supported churchmen who publicly promoted anti-Judaism and what, in retrospect, can be recognized as the seeds of the racial doctrine of anti-Semitism. One would have to be pretty naive, or hold to a preposterous doctrine of the moral impeccability of popes, to be surprised, never mind shocked, by Professor Kertzer's "discovery." As the Church has always taught, and as the present pope has relentlessly reiterated, the Church on its earthly sojourn is, from top to bottom, composed of sinners. None of us—Christian, Jew, or whatever—is exempt from the consequences of the Fall.

A Catholic commentary, referring to the Kertzer book, speaks of "an unprecedented series of attacks by Jewish authors on the Catholic Church." That is both false and dangerous. Over the last two centuries and more, anti-Catholicism, which should never be taken lightly, was much more virulent, both in Europe and America, than it is today. As in the past, so also today, many of the more strident attacks are by Catholics, or at least by people who insist that, despite all, they are Catholic. Witness recent books such as John Cornwall's *Hitler's Pope*, Garry Wills' *Papal Sins*, and James Carroll's *Constantine's Sword*. Cornwall and Wills leave no doubt that their motivation in attacking the papal

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office is to promote changes in Catholic teachings and practices from which they dissent. Carroll is more ambitious, advocating a wholesale recasting of the Christian gospel that eliminates the centrality of the Cross and Christ's redemptive suffering. Their purposes are understandable, even if they do not excuse distorting history and pandering to anti-Catholic bigotry.

It is somewhat surprising that the *New York Times Book Review* gave the Kertzer book to such a notable pope-basher as Garry Wills, but not surprising at all that Wills uses the occasion to assault, once again, what he has called papal "structures of deceit," ending with yet another swipe at John Paul II. So what else is new? Please do not misunderstand; I am not saying that we should get used to it. I am saying we should not be surprised by it. The Catholic Church, in its teaching and its very constitution, is profoundly offensive to much in our elite and popular culture. The Church should never court hostility. Being countercultural is not a virtue to be cultivated. It is simply the consequence when so much of the culture is counter to the truth to which the Church bears witness.

We should try to make that witness as attractively, persuasively, and winsomely as we possibly can. In this we have no better example than John Paul II. But we also should have no illusions. There are people who deeply dislike and even hate the Church, and they are frequently masters of the teaching of contempt for all things Catholic. Many of them are Jewish, many of them are Protestants, of both liberal and fundamentalist stripes, and many of them are simply militant secularists whose ideology prescribes that religion was supposed to have disappeared a long time ago, and they view the Catholic Church as the chief obstacle to that desired end. And some of the teachers of contempt are Catholics who insist that they are wrongly accused of anti-Catholicism. They say they are only opposed to Catholicism as it is. They are enthusiastically supportive of Catholicism as they think it ought to be. They are very confused, of course, and usually very angry, but we should try to engage them as best we can, knowing that, like the poor, they are always with us. Most certainly, we should not be intimidated by them.

From Voltaire's *Écrasez l'infâme* to today's usually more tempered railings and whinings, anti-Catholicism is a familiar beast. We dare not think it entirely tamed, for it can turn very nasty, but neither should we be overly alarmed by its every stirring. The thing to do is to keep an eye on it, and alert others to its continuing presence and potential dangers.

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WHILE WE'RE AT IT

■ "An Evening of Readings and Carols" with the Westminster Chapel Choir at Princeton University is an immensely popular annual event. There is the problem, however, of Christmas being so very, well, you know, Christian. The program notes by choir director James Jordan say that the event "was inspired by the format of the Lessons and Carols at King's College, Cambridge." But there is a crucial difference. "The format of the King's College program tells the story of Christmas through biblical readings and illustrative music. While the format of music with interspersed readings is maintained in Westminster's program, the intent is not to tell the story of Christmas, but to perform music and readings that reflect the universal themes of the season: birth, hope, anticipation, good will, and joy." Instead of biblical readings, there is, among other readings, "Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus," and a Christmasy excerpt from Robert Fulghum's *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten.* The music, however, is Christmas. Or, as Mr. Jordan explains, "The season of Christmas has provided the framework and texts for the great composers and writers throughout the ages." Not exactly. Before there was "the season of Christmas" there was Christmas, as in the Christ Mass. And before that, the birth of a specific child whom many call the Christ. There is nothing less universal or more particular to the elite sensibilities of the academic subculture than craven obedience to the dictate that the universal requires the displacement of the particular, resulting in the artistic and spiritual incoherence that is the Westminster Choir's embarrassingly parasitical program, "An Evening of Readings and Carols."

■ Who is served by "diversity quotas"? Speaking recently at a small college in Minnesota, I was told by a faculty member that they were having a hard time making their diversity quota. College-ready black students, in particular, are in short supply. The best go to bigger and more prestigious schools that can offer them more money. "We're left scrambling for the left-overs," he said. "So why are we doing this? Not for the black students, most of whom drop out along the way. Not for our other students, for whom their first experience with blacks is with blacks who can't make it and are messed up in various ways. We're doing it because we adopted a quota, and because having minorities around makes us feel better about ourselves. We're doing it for ourselves." Despite his misgivings, he wanted me to know that he supported the diversity program. I stayed for the Sunday Mass,

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where the bulletin announced that the offering that day would go to a housing program for low-income families in a nearby city. "The program now provides housing to some sixty people, thirty of them children, with families that include people of Somalian, Hmong, African American, Native American, European, Latino, and Asian descent." That's exquisite. A little arithmetic suggests that there must be one to three families for each group. The affluent congregation at Mass I estimated to be at least 98 percent Caucasian. Being people of refined sensibility, they feel a little guilty about that. Why specify the ethnic and racial diversity of those who are the objects of their charity? Would it make a difference if the housing program was helping sixty Mexicans or sixty Somalians or sixty Native Americans? Well, yes, it wouldn't make them feel as good about themselves. The ethnic and racial specification certifies that these good people at Mass are committed to diversity. And they undoubtedly are good people. 'Tis a pity that they feel guilty about who they are.

■ It hardly seems possible that new writings of St. Augustine (354-430) could still be turning up, but recent years have witnessed the discovery of batches of sermons and letters hitherto unknown. They give us a more intimate feel for the everyday life of Augustine as a bishop, says Peter Brown of Princeton, that most celebrated of contemporary Augustine scholars. While his see of Hippo (in present-day Algeria) was far from the centers of power in Rome and Ravenna, Augustine was a famous man toward the end of his life and was constantly besieged by people seeking his counsel. In order to respond to these requests, he had to set aside work on such major projects as the *Tractatus on the Gospel of Saint John* and *City of God*. He writes to Possidius, a fellow bishop and friend, in 419: "I am annoyed because of the demands that are thrust on me to write, arriving unannounced, from here, there, and everywhere. . . . They never stop." Brown quotes, in order to correct, a historian of our day who says that, after the conversion of Constantine, the bishops became the undisputed spiritual leaders of a society "in which church and state had become inextricably interdependent." Augustine, writes Brown, "would have pointed out that, seen from Hippo in the 420s, the *saeculum*, the continued non-Christian habits of 'the world' had lost none of their power. We should not be misled by the statements of many textbooks on the rapid rise to power of the Catholic Church in late Roman society. The victory of Christianity in the age of Augustine had been, in many ways, spectacular but fragile. Over a century after the conversion of Constantine, 'church and state' were far from being 'inextricably interdependent.'" Imperial officials and great landowners were very much in charge and "the Catholic bishops of Africa had remained little men, with little power." The bishops protested and tried to protect whom they could, but the cities and the poor continued to be oppressed, Augustine wrote, "while we groan and are unable to help." Particularly moving are Augustine's futile protests against the slave trade that passed through Hippo, supplying African peasants to estates in Italy and southern Gaul. These traders "traffick not in animals but in human beings," he protested to the emperor, adding, in an appeal to the emperor's patriotism, "not in barbarians but in loyal Romans." All to little avail. These newly found letters and sermons, together with Peter Brown's commentary, increase our wonder at Augustine's great philosophical and theological treatises, written in the whirligig of incessant demands upon his attention. He declared in a sermon: "We who preach and write books, we write in a manner altogether different from the manner in which the canon of the Scriptures has been written. We write while we make progress. We learn something new every day. We dictate at the same time as we explore. We speak as we still knock for understanding." The great Augustine had no delusions that he was in control, nor that the Church had triumphed. From that we in our times might derive a measure of consolation.

■ Even the strongest proponents of parental choice in education have been known to harbor a terrible fear. Namely, once independent schools of all sorts are brought within the orbit of government funding, through vouchers or other means, the state will be in a position to impose its standards in a way that turns them into de facto government schools, virtually indistinguishable from the current public school system. In this way, genuinely independent schooling, and with it even the limited parental choice that now exists, would be effectively destroyed. That nightmare is the dream of James G. Dwyer, who teaches law at William and Mary, and has just published *Vouchers Within Reason* (Cornell). He is a great champion of vouchers because they "represent an opportunity for states to accomplish what they have been unable to do in the past—namely, to bring academic accountability to religious schools, many of which fail to provide a good secular education." I believe Dwyer's dream and our nightmare can be prevented by vigorous resistance to government controls, but it is useful to have someone present an alternative scenario with such candor.

■ Arguing from a *sola scriptura* (the Bible alone) premise, Pastor Ronald Marshall of First Lutheran

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Church, West Seattle, Washington, explains in *Forum Letter* what he believes is his pastorally caring approach to homosexuals and homosexuality. "So I uphold the Old Testament prohibitions repeated in the New Testament," he writes. The fact that Jesus did not explicitly confirm such prohibitions "does not mean he opposed them, only that he assumed them." Pr. Marshall continues: "Furthermore I do not agree that the Bible has been misunderstood on same-sex matters as it was on women's issues or slavery. The cases are not parallel. For women and slaves there were conflicting New Testament examples that undercut the verses which were against women and for slavery. No such examples exist to undercut the verses against same-sex acts. So in the case of homosexuality there is no reason—as there was in the case of women and slavery—to protest. It hasn't been misinterpreted because the needed conflicting examples in favor of homosexual behavior are simply not in the Bible. Without those examples the needed tension for generating a corrected interpretation is missing. Finally I also disagree that when the New Testament says homosexuality is unnatural it does not apply to those who are naturally homosexual because of their inherent orientation. Being born homosexual does not exempt them from the curse. This is because the word *natural* in the New Testament does not mean how-one-is-inclined-from-birth. Rather it means how-things-were-set-up-in-the-Garden-of-Eden at the time of creation. That is the biblical meaning of the word *natural*. On that score homosexual behavior is unnatural because it goes against the pairing of the two opposite sexes created in the beginning—male and female. So homosexual behavior is wrong because the Bible says it is. This I believe. Therefore it would be perfectly hateful of me to affirm homosexual behavior. No, the only loving response I can make is to disapprove of homosexual behavior. Anything else would be to throw my gay, lesbian, and bisexual friends into harm's way." What about that don't you understand?

■ A subscriber who has read Christopher Beem's recently published *The Necessity of Politics: Reclaiming American Public Life* (Chicago) wants to know what I think of it. I think it's a thoughtful contribution to an important discussion about politics and civil society. Beem contends that in the early phase of the civil society movement (sometimes overlapping with what is called communitarianism) Peter Berger and I set it on an excessively anti-politics and anti-government direction, exaggerating one side of Tocqueville's anxieties about the future of democracy. (At one point he even accuses us of a libertarian bent.) Beem is happier with what he views as the post-Berger-Neuhaus civil society discussion led by Robert Putnam and others, which emphasizes the weaknesses of family, church, neighborhood, etc. that Berger and I call the "mediating institutions." In short, he thinks we're too sanguine about people and people-sized institutions and too skeptical about politics and government. That's worth arguing about, but I'll still take the side of the argument advanced in our little book, *To Empower People*. Where I begin to seriously disagree with Beem is in his notion that the government can enforce something like a "moral consensus," and where I think he starts edging over the top is with his appreciation, admittedly a critical appreciation, of Hegel's inflated notion of the State. That being said, I do not view *The Necessity of Politics* as an attack but as an intelligent intervention in a necessarily continuing conversation.

■ According to the *Glasgow Herald*, Father John Fitzsimmons "has become for many Scots the voice of the Catholic Church." Formerly the rector of the Scottish College in Rome and now pastor of a parish in Renfrewshire, Fr. Fitzsimmons, "tubby, avuncular, and clad in Calvin Klein slippers" (among other things, one hopes), approves of abortion and homosexuality, and is positively enthusiastic about contraception. The *Herald* quotes him as saying of the current pontificate: "There is no spirit of openness. It is utterly authoritarian under this pope. He has polarized the Church. Pope John Paul II is tearing the Church apart and making it hard for people like me to remain a part of it. The Church has got to get rid of the baggage the Pope has brought. It has failed to live up to my expectations of it." There you have it, the Church has failed to live up to his expectations. One is reminded of the many articles by like-minded Catholics published under the generic title, "Why I Remain a Catholic." To which one imagines Christ and the Church saying, "Please, do us no favors."

■ There's right to life, and then there's right to life. A different meaning of the phrase is provided by the Australian Philip Nitschke, president of the Voluntary Euthanasia Research Foundation, who is planning to launch a "euthanasia boat," modeled on the "abortion boat" that sails in international waters near countries where abortion is illegal. Nitschke is also the inventor of the "deliverance machine" and "peaceful pill" for people who want to go it alone. He is asked by an interviewer: "Would there be any restrictions on who would be served on your boat? Do you see any restrictions that should be placed on euthanasia generally? If I am depressed, do I qualify? If an elderly woman's husband dies and she says she no longer has anything to live for, would you help her kill herself?

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What about a troubled teen? Who qualifies? Who decides life is worth living?" Nitschke responds: "This difficult question I will answer in two parts. My personal position is that if we believe that there is a right to life, then we must accept that people have a right to dispose of that life whenever they want. (In the same way as the right to freedom of religion has implicit the right to be an atheist, and the right to freedom of speech involves the right to remain silent.) I do not believe that telling people they have a right to life while denying them the means, manner, or information necessary for them to give this life away has any ethical consistency. So all people qualify, not just those with the training, knowledge, or resources to find out how to 'give away' their life. And someone needs to provide this knowledge, training, or resource necessary to anyone who wants it, including the depressed, the elderly bereaved, [and] the troubled teen. If we are to remain consistent and we believe that [individuals have] the right to dispose of their lives, we should not erect artificial barriers in the way of sub-groups who don't meet our criteria. This would mean that the so-called 'peaceful pill' should be available in the supermarket so that those old enough to understand death could obtain death peacefully at the time of their choosing. It's hard enough to imagine how such a development would affect society, but I believe the impact would not be as great as people fear. One group to clearly benefit from such a development would be those terminally ill patients who would derive immense comfort from knowing that they now have such control in their hands. We have a great deal of anecdotal evidence from the clinics I run in all Australian states that the acquisition of such substances or drugs takes away a great deal of uncertainty associated with the feeling of loss of control. Perhaps it is a paradox, but we see it time and time again, that the acquisition of lethal substances that would guarantee a peaceful death enables those suffering to keep on going, living longer, and getting more out of the remaining part of their life. So empowering the entire population in this way could result in a net increase in the integrated total of human life, something I'm sure that many of the detractors of voluntary euthanasia would support." One can see the television ads: "Take charge of your life. The Peaceful Pill."

■ Economics 101: "A popular, though probably apocryphal, story of the era illustrates something of people's attitudes about stretching a dollar. It seems an FBI man had confiscated a counterfeit $20 bill and asked that the hotel manager place it in the safe until he left in the morning. The manager needed some cash to pay for repairs on his car. So, not knowing the bill was bogus, he borrowed it. The garage owner accepted the bill and immediately went to the grocery store and used it to buy food for his family. The grocer used the fake twenty to pay a bill at the hardware store, whose owner turned around and purchased some things from a traveling salesman using the same $20 bill. The salesman checked in at the hotel and paid for his room with the counterfeit bill. The hotel manager finally put the bill in the safe and returned it to the FBI in the [morning]. Everyone used a single counterfeit bill to transact $100 worth of business without using legal tender." That's from Walter W. Benjamin's *The Magical Years*, a boyhood remembrance of growing up during the Depression in a small Minnesota town (published by Beaver's Pond Press). It's a bittersweet, but mainly sweet, story, bearing this epigraph from Willa Cather's *O Pioneers!*: "Isn't it queer: there are only two or three human stories, and they go on repeating themselves as fiercely as if they had never happened before; like the larks in this country that have been singing the same five notes over for thousands of years."

■ The lethal logic moves on most logically. The leading center for the treatment of premature babies in the Netherlands has announced it will no longer provide intensive care for babies born before twenty-five weeks gestation. It was explained that only 34 percent of them survive, and half of those have physical or mental handicaps by the age of two. It might be pointed out that the same reasoning could be applied to the elderly who are severely ill. But, of course, the Netherlands has already attended to that.

■ Damon Linker, our new book editor, asks, "Do we notice junk books like this or just pass over them in silence?" Ordinarily we ignore them, but I'll make an exception for the book that raised the question. It's Daniel C. Maguire's *Sacred Choices: The Right to Contraception and Abortion in Ten World Religions.* Another pro-abortion tract by ex-priest Maguire of Marquette University, one of the more strident but lesser known dissenting theologians, is hardly worthy of notice. But it provides occasion to note the death of its publisher. Fortress was once the press of the Lutheran Church in America (LCA) and a powerhouse of serious religious and theological publishing in America. When the LCA was merged with the American Lutheran Church (ALC) in 1987, Fortress was merged with the ALC's Augsburg Press—which also once published books of consequence—under the meaningless title Augsburg Fortress. Many have observed that the merged denomination, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, is much less than the sum of its previous parts, but nowhere is that

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lessness more sadly evident than in its publishing house. *Sacred Choices*, it says here, is one in a series "in collaboration with" something called the Religious Consultation on Population, Reproductive Health, and Ethics. Fortress Press. RIP.

■ It is over a year since the Supreme Court upheld the right of the Boy Scouts to exclude leaders who, on the basis of their public statements and actions, raise a question about their possible interest in doing rude things with little boys. This policy of discrimination prompted the editors of the *New York Times* to declare that the Scouts are outside the American mainstream and "something akin to a hate group." Leftists of sundry stripes went into high gear with a campaign to get public schools, corporations, and organizations of every possible kind to cut their ties with the Scouts. So how is the Boy Scouts of America doing? Quite well, thank you. At least that's the report by Peter Ferrara, who teaches law at George Mason University and, or so it says here, is executive director of the ACLU. Schools and other public institutions are being judicially overruled on their "viewpoint discrimination" against the Scouts, and the public continues to think that the editors of the *Times* are way out of the mainstream. A recent poll shows 75 percent of Americans holding a favorable view of the Scouts, with 11 percent unfavorable. After those polled are told of the Scouts' policy regarding homosexual leaders, the favorable rating increases. Yet the campaign against the Scouts goes on. Mr. Ferrara concludes: "All of this illiberalism stems from a fundamental change in the gay rights movement. It began by arguing that adults should be free to do what they choose in the privacy of their own bedrooms, without government interference. But today, the movement advocates the very different proposition that the power of government should be used to force everyone to approve of homosexual conduct, morally and socially. That cannot be achieved by liberal means, because it is not a liberal goal."

■ Among U.S. medical doctors, according to a recent American Medical Association study, there is a big difference—22 percent vs. 9 percent—between the rank-and-file and members of the AMA's House of Delegates when it comes to support for a law allowing physician-assisted suicide. Otherwise, there were only two variables that seemed to make a difference in the position that doctors take: political orientation and religion. "Physicians who said they were politically conservative were more likely to oppose physician-assisted suicide. . . . About 47 percent of politically conservative doctors opposed doctor-assisted suicide, compared with the 19 percent of politically liberal physicians who opposed it. When it came to religion, 45 percent of Catholic physicians opposed physician-assisted suicide, 32 percent of Protestant physicians opposed it, and 16 percent of Jewish physicians opposed it. Also, those who said that religion was 'very important' were far more likely to oppose legalizing physician-assisted suicide—55 percent of them—than doctors who said religion was 'not at all important,' 18 percent."

■ I suppose nobody has done more than Mark Noll of Wheaton College to help us understand the strengths and weaknesses of evangelical Protestantism. His new book, *American Evangelical Christianity: An Introduction* (Blackwell), is treated at length by David Martin in the evangelical publication *Books & Culture*. Martin shares Noll's long-standing concern about what he has called "the scandal of the evangelical mind." Martin writes: "Let me put it this way. One knows plenty of 'hard' scientists who are evangelicals, and evangelicals are also well represented in practical and useful sciences, like medicine and agronomy. The Victoria Institute in London to which Noll refers was full of such people, but the real problem lies in the different kinds of souls which exist to inhabit the 'many mansions' of eternity. Evangelicalism is clear about our equal need of redemption but poor in its provision for artistic and sensitive souls. Catholicism may be less democratic, but it is decidedly superior in its provision for the varieties of the human spirit." Why is it, Martin asks, that a community so zealous for "the Word" has produced so little in terms of notable writing? "This minatory history of literature is also the spiritual biography of thousands who, if their imaginations had been fed, might have been part of an opening of the evangelical mind. As an Oxford don put it to me, herself an evangelical and teacher of English, you cannot engage in practical criticism with an overmastering interest in godliness and virtue. It is not remotely possible even with Milton, Renaissance Puritan though he was. If you are apt for Christian sustenance then you turn to the metaphysicals, to Johnson, Hopkins, Auden, Eliot, Geoffrey Hill, and the like—none of them evangelical, and usually Catholic or high Anglican. Once again here lies a clue as to why evangelicals turn to writers like C. S. Lewis." As for contemporary music, Martin notes that there are outstanding composers of strong Christian commitment—Pärt, Tavener, MacMillan, et al.—but they are Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, or Lutheran. Evangelicalism, to be sure, has Havergal, Crosby, Sankey, and others who have put the "old, old story" into music that speaks directly to the soul, but it is a limited genre. Martin writes: "The contemplative mode offers a clue here, because participation can be

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coercive, and especially so in requiring positive feelings and collective happiness. Just because conversion brings tears of joy and turns a soul from bleak despair to 'rejoicing in the light,' there is some kind of ban on listening to 'the still sad music of humanity' and the '*lachrymae rerum.*' We are too easily forced back to the kind of childishness represented by the repetitions of 'I'm H.A.P.P.Y.' or 'A little talk with Jesus makes it right.' 'Loathéd melancholy' is as great a sin for evangelicals as acedia was for medieval Christians." The crucial insight here, I think, is on making provision for the varieties of the human spirit, which is incompatible with the coercion of participation and positive feelings. It is by no means a problem limited to evangelicals. A Catholic priest who is under the misimpression that the liturgy is his platform rather the Church's worship that he is to serve begins a Mass with the exuberant declaration, "This morning our hearts are overflowing with joy!" Not quite, thought a father in the congregation who had just learned that his son, who has been on dialysis for years, received a final refusal for another kidney transplant. Music, literature, liturgy, and preaching that does not comprehend the *lachrymae rerum*, the tears of things, proposes a victory that too often seems to have bypassed the Cross. The problem is with a piety of abundant answers made implausible by the failure to take the time to understand the questions.

■ At one of those impossibly tedious late-night preparatory sessions for the United Nations summit on children's rights, a Canadian delegate, tired and exasperated, finally blurted out that of course the phrase "reproductive health care and services" includes abortion. Pro-lifers at the meeting and elsewhere were exultant. For many years, pro-abortionists had denied what the Canadian delegate admitted. Their strategy has been to get language such as "reproductive health care and services" ensconced in the "customary law" of international agreements, in the hope that at some point a tribunal would rule that such language includes abortion, thus establishing abortion as an international human right. This strategy is made explicit in a lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court by the U.S.-based Center for Reproductive Law and Policy (CRLP). The suit aims to overturn the "Mexico City policy" that was established by President Reagan, rescinded by President Clinton, and reinstated by the Bush Administration. That policy forbids the use of U.S. funds for overseas groups that promote or perform abortions. The CRLP suit asserts, "Generally recognized international legal norms may, if endorsed and accepted by the vast majority of nations, become part of customary international law and thus binding on the U.S. even if it does not ratify or endorse those norms." The cat is now out of the bag, so to speak. CRLP and its allies, says Brigham Young law professor Richard Wilkins, are anticipating "the eventuality that *Roe v. Wade* may be overturned by the United States." He adds that this strategy demonstrates "CRLP's contempt for the American political system, as well as a disregard for more general notions of national sovereignty and democratic self-determination." The unwonted candor of the Canadian delegate and of the CRLP suit, it is hoped, will alert more UN delegates to the sly jargon employed in bypassing political accountability in order to advance the pro-abortion agenda.

■ Long-term readers know that we have very definite views about "the judicial usurpation of politics." When the courts decide that the people cannot be trusted with the really important decisions, the result is not only "the end of democracy" but the end of politics. A long time ago, Marx prophesied that the government of men would be replaced by the administration of things, which is another way of saying the end of politics. Government as the rational and just administration of social goods has a great appeal for academics who are skilled at coming up with theories of what is rational and just. And for judges who think of themselves as philosopher kings. That approach has decidedly less appeal for politicians whose job it is to broker among conflicting interests and their attendant understandings of what is rational and just. This matter is framed very nicely by British philosopher John Gray in the *Times Literary Supplement*: "It is only during the past thirty years that political philosophy has been ruled by the strange idea of a theory of justice. From Aristotle onwards, philosophers have tried to find reasons for our judgments about justice, but most have believed that when we differ about what it demands, it is not a theory that we require. What we need then is *politics*—a practical activity in which history, sentiment, and the sense of belonging in a common enterprise are at least as important as any kind of theoretical reasoning. With the ascendancy of an American orthodoxy in which political philosophy is viewed as a branch of jurisprudence, however, the center of gravity of the subject has shifted. No longer do philosophers aim to improve the political reasoning of ordinary citizens. Instead, they see their task as providing a body of principles which can be interpreted by a court. In this view, best represented in John Rawls' deeply meditated and intricately reasoned, yet supremely parochial and unhistorical book, *A Theory of Justice* (1971), politics is redundant. Philosophers supply principles dictating the scope of individual liberty and the distribution of social goods; judges apply them. Little if anything of importance

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remains for political decision. Rawls calls his theory 'political liberalism,' but it is more accurately described as a species of antipolitical legalism."

■ *Sexual Fulfillment: For Single and Married, Straight and Gay, Young and Old* is a new book by the former presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), Herbert Chilstrom, and bishop emeritus of the St. Paul (Minnesota) Area Synod, Lowell Erdahl. The gist of the argument is that "sex is a wonderful gift from God, given to us for our enjoyment." The bishops have good things to say about "self-pleasuring," a.k.a. masturbation, favor the ordination of gays and lesbians in "faithful relationships," and propose that such "holy unions" should be blessed by the Church. "We oppose abusive and domineering sexual behavior," they write. "But we also believe that we should be concerned about all of the wonderful pleasures we have failed to enjoy." It is not clear whether the last sentence is intended autobiographically. Since they provide no principled argument and consistently reject any appeal to tradition (such as what the Church has always believed and taught), it does seem churlish of the bishops to deny to sadists and masochists the abuse and domination that they think necessary to their "sexual fulfillment." Perhaps it is simply that the bishops recognize that, even among libertine Minnesota Lutherans, there is a felt need to draw the line somewhere. To paraphrase Mrs. Campbell, "I don't care what they do, so long as they don't do it in the barn and frighten the cows." Lake Wobegon has come a long way.

■ There was much sadness, embarrassment, and casting of blame when Danny Almonte of the Bronx pitched that perfect Little League game but then turned out to be too old for the Little League. People tend to have very strong views about anything touching on the exploitation of children. Not always, however, as Lionel Tiger of Rutgers University points out in a column taking off from the Almonte affair: "The national culture is usually savage about this kind of violation. But not always. That execrable rant, *The Vagina Monologues* [an off-Broadway play], contains a scene in which a mature woman with dark skin describes to audience applause her luscious sexual seduction of a thirteen-year-old, dark-skinned girl who had never seen the apartment of such a prosperous woman, with a glad stereo and all the branded drinks. Virtually no one drew attention to this statutory rape . . . and the show plays every night without a peep of complaint. The lesson is that if you are going to commit moral fraud about the young, do so with the wind of community sanctimony at your back."

■ A remarkably broad coalition has gathered in support of a Federal Marriage Amendment proposed by the Alliance for Marriage. The amendment reads: "Marriage in the United States shall consist only of the union of a man and a woman. Neither this Constitution or the constitution of any state, nor state or federal law, shall be construed to require that marital status or the legal incidents thereof be conferred upon unmarried couples or groups." An amendment to the Constitution faces formidable barriers, which is how the Founders intended it, but this one certainly deserves the widest possible public debate, and should, I think, be supported. Interestingly, the proposed amendment has been attacked by gay activists and some conservatives, both claiming that it violates the federalist understanding that marriage and family law is left to the states. The gay tactic here is an instance of high disingenuousness, since they have made no secret of their game plan, which is to force other states to recognize same-sex unions (as in Vermont) under the full faith and credit provision of the U.S. Constitution. They are also counting on the U.S. Supreme Court, which in the 1996 *Romer v. Evans* ruling declared that a Colorado referendum prohibiting what the voters viewed as special rights for gays manifested an irrational "animus" against homosexuals. The gay game plan to legitimate same-sex relationships as marriage is precisely and explicitly aimed at overriding federalism. As Judge Robert Bork, who helped draft the proposed amendment, has written, "One way or another, federalism is going to be overridden. The only question is whether the general rule will permit or prohibit the marriage of same-sex couples. . . . The Federal Marriage Amendment is an attempt, and perhaps the only hope, to preserve marriage as an institution of incalculable value." Bork and other supporters of the amendment note the parallels with the notorious *Roe v. Wade* decision of 1973 regarding abortion, arguing that, if the gay movement succeeds in its strategy, we are facing the probability of another such instance of the judicial usurpation of politics. The alternative is to submit the question of what will count as marriage to the debate and decision of the people through our representative political institutions, which is precisely what the proposed Federal Marriage Amendment aims to do.

■ On February 11, Gao Zhan was at the Beijing airport on her way home from a family vacation with her Chinese-American husband and their five-year-old son. She was arrested, imprisoned, relentlessly interrogated, and otherwise abused for five and a half months. *World* magazine had a moving story, underscoring her testimony to Christ who sustained

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her through the ordeal (the family is Missouri Synod Lutheran). Her faith is at the heart of the way she tells the story. A few weeks later the *New York Times Magazine* had a story on what she had been through. Not a mention of you know what or You Know Who. Maybe the *Times* interviewed a different Gao Zhan who had a similar experience?

■ The surprising thing is that Michael Lind's vaporings were carried by United Press International. Lind, a prolific social critic and champion of the gay and lesbian cause, explodes at the remarks of Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson in the immediate aftermath of September 11. Gustav Niebuhr of the *Times* seized on Falwell's remarks in particular, which were made on Robertson's *700 Club*, and the story had, as they say, long legs. Falwell pointed at the ACLU, pro-abortionists, and the gay lobby for corrupting the morality of America and inviting the judgment of God, as evident in the September 11 attacks. Falwell's remarks, at that time and on a nationally televised program, were, to say the very, very least, injudicious. The next day he issued a statement emphasizing that he blamed nobody but the attackers for the attack. Since that fateful day, however, there have surely been similar discussions in thousands of Bible classes and millions of homes around the country. After all, the belief that rampant evils have consequences and may invite Divine judgment is hardly out of the mainstream. Lind writes, however, that such views "are un-American." But he has even graver charges to make. "Like Tokyo Rose during World War II and like Jane Fonda during the Vietnam War, the leaders of the Moral Majority and Christian Coalition have given aid and comfort to the enemy. . . . Their fundamentalist ideology is essentially identical to that of the Muslim extremists." He goes on to lump them with William Bennett, Robert Bork, William Kristol, Charles Colson, and your writer, all of whom, he says, are promoting "a theocratic crusade of a 'Judeo-Christian America' against an equally theocratic enemy." "In this war, V is not going to stand for Virtue. It is going to stand for Victory," Lind asserts. "Whatever you Blame-America-First conservatives may think, we know that this is not a holy war between your medieval religion and theirs. It's a war of reason and tolerance against medieval superstition." Continuing in that ever so reasonable and tolerant vein, he notes that after the attack many leaders were speaking of Americans as "people of faith." To which Lind spurts, "'People of faith.' The very term sounds ominous after last Tuesday." I do not say that Michael Lind is un-American, but he is beyond doubt angrily alienated from what in this case is aptly described as the mainstream of the American experience. He should be very grateful that Christians and Jews and, yes, most Muslims in America adhere to truths that include him, despite his vituperation, in the continuing community of moral discourse and concern, even if he excludes them. That they do so is a virtue. Perhaps when the heat of the moment has passed, Mr. Lind will calm down and recognize his dependence upon the beliefs that he holds in such vulgar contempt.

■ Those who have been wondering whatever happened to Father Charles Curran, the Catholic moral theologian who was some years ago decertified as such, may want to take note of his *The Catholic Moral Tradition Today: A Synthesis*, recently published by Georgetown University. Fr. Curran, who now teaches at Southern Methodist, aims to rebut John Paul II's encyclical *Veritatis Splendor*, employing a Relational-Responsible Model of morality that is attuned to contemporary culture's "big church," as distinct from the narrow and authoritarian Catholic Church. Fr. James Burtchaell reviews Curran's project in the British-based *Studies in Christian Ethics*. According to Burtchaell, Curran's system is helpful in drawing a moral distinction between "the unconsidered IUD, the hasty abortion, and the solipsistic masturbation," on the one hand, and, on the other, "the relational-responsible intercourse with someone else's needy husband, the just-this-once removal of Mom, and the compassionate visit to the I-Thou bathhouse." In the book, Curran sets himself against Methodist ethicist Stanley Hauerwas, who argues that serious morality is always tied to a particular tradition, and who for that reason has the highest regard for John Paul II and *Veritatis Splendor*. Burtchaell observes in passing: "One cannot entirely avoid the irony that the astringent Hauerwas is read attentively by critical audiences of every church and none, while Curran's presuppositions, concerns, and even vocabulary confine his arguments so intramurally to a (non-'big') Catholic audience." There is nothing so stiflingly parochial as a facile universalism.

■ Maybe there is accounting for taste after all. BBC News reports on a psychiatric study at a London hospital that shows a connection between brain power and a liking for classical or pop music. In a study of dementia patients, as brain power diminishes the patients sometimes change from liking classical to liking pop, but not the other way around. "What this may mean is that you require more gray matter to appreciate classical music and that you don't need so much gray matter to appreciate pop music, so as you lose gray matter your taste in music changes accordingly," explained Dr. Raj Persaud. Dr. Susan Hallam, who has done studies in music and the

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human attention span, is skeptical. "I know some highly academic people who like pop music," she says. So what does being an academic have to do with it?

■ I don't know what to make of this. For a long time it's been okay for blacks to use the N-word. Co-opting slurs directed your way may be smart strategy, or simply evidence of feeling very secure. In any event, Steven Spielberg is among those who are funding a new magazine edited by twenty-five-year-old Jennifer Bleyer. It's called *Heeb*, an old ethnic slur for "Hebrew." Ms. Bleyer of Brooklyn says it's part of an "image makeover." "Who wants to call themselves *Jew*? We've been called Jews for four thousand years. It's played out. *Heeb* just sounds so much cooler."

■ A couple of years ago I suggested here that we would know a corner had been turned when the *New York Times* weddings section included same-sex unions. We are almost there. Joseph Quenqua, a p.r. executive, submitted an announcement of his union with Art Smith, hoping that the paper's advocacy of same-sex unions and what he calls its "extreme efforts to include gays and lesbians" in all aspects of its coverage would result in its being published. News editor William Borders responded, "We don't feel able to open our pages to civil unions in part because that would amount to taking an editorial position in the news columns on an issue that still very much divides society." Mr. Quenqua, quite logically, responded that the *Times* should accept in its own pages what it urges the rest of society to accept. Mr. Borders assured him that the policy is "under regular review." Meaning, it is reasonable to infer, that the corner is very near.

■ "In necessary things unity; in doubtful things liberty; in all things charity." I attributed it to the seventeenth-century English divine Richard Baxter. That's the attribution in *The Oxford Book of Quotations*. But Jack Hartigan of New York has come across an article by Hans Rollman in *Restoration Quarterly* that claims Baxter, in *The Saints' Everlasting Rest*, attributes the maxim to *Paraenesis votiva pro pace ecclesiae ad Theologos Augustanae Confessionis* by Peter Meiderlin (Rupertus Meldenius), a German Lutheran writer of the time. I seem to have mislaid my copy of *Paraenesis* and so can't check it out, but I thought you might want to know. In any event, and to the disappointment of some Catholic friends, the maxim is certainly not original with John XXIII, although he gave it renewed currency.

■ *Stupidity* by Avital Ronell is just out from University of Illinois Press. The catalogue description opens with this: "Nietzsche, Einstein, and Deleuze agree: the question of stupidity, its unremitting sway, needs to be dealt with. This book explores the urgency of stupidity, its hiding places as well as its everyday public appearances." Doing our bit to deal with it, we did not order the book for review.

■ "Workers' Rights Suffering as China Goes Capitalist," is the headline in the *New York Times* story by Erik Eckholm. It seems many private and foreign companies in China are paying low wages without health or retirement benefits. Capitalism will do that every time, just as Chairman Mao said. Oh, for the good old days of mass starvation and reeducation camps.

■ The mystery has been solved! At least as solved as such mysteries sometimes can be. I have on different occasions noted that a much-quoted statement by President Eisenhower may never have been stated by him. Now Professor Jon Butler of Yale sends me an article in the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* (XLIX/1) by Prof. Patrick Henry of Swarthmore, "'And I Don't Care What It is Is': The Tradition-History of a Civil Religion Proof-Text." In a delicious sendup of tradition-textual-critical sleuthing, comparable to Henry's more accustomed sleuthing in the texts of the Church Fathers, he persuasively demonstrates that President Eisenhower, at around noon on Monday, December 22, 1952, at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York at a luncheon sponsored by the Freedoms Foundation, actually did say: *"In other words, our form of government has no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith, and I don't care what it is."* These words have been many times cited by, inter alia, Will Herberg, Sydney Ahlstrom, Peter Berger, Robert Bellah, Martin Marty, William Lee Miller, and your scribe in order to demonstrate, variously, the shallowness or depth of American civil religion, and of Dwight D. Eisenhower. The problem is that the Eisenhower statement was differently quoted by different authors who were footnoting one another as their source. In the context now unearthed by Prof. Henry, Eisenhower was recounting a discussion with Marshal Zhukov of the Soviet Union. He was explaining the foundation of the American government by reference to the Declaration's statement that all men are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights. Then came the famous italicized sentence above. Immediately after that, however, was this: "With us of course it is the Judeo-Christian concept, but it must be a religion that all men are created equal." He added, "So what was the use of me talking to Zhukov about that? Religion, he had been taught, was the

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opiate of the people." Far from demonstrating that Eisenhower was addle-brained or believed in a "religion in general" in which all religions are equally valuable (the conventional interpretation of the statement), he was simply asserting an unexceptionable truth about the American founding, and about democracy more generally. We are all indebted to Prof. Patrick Henry for his detective work.

■ Across from the United Nations building on First Avenue are inscribed the majestic words of Isaiah 2: "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Each year there is a prayer service at the Church of the Holy Family next to the UN marking the opening of the General Assembly. It is attended by the Cardinal Archbishop of New York and the General Secretary of the UN, along with numerous delegates and other dignitaries. This year's reading of Isaiah 2 went like this: "He will settle arguments between nations. They will pound their swords and spears into rakes and shovels; they will never make war or attack one another." Other scriptural readings were similarly dumbed-down and degraded. It is deeply embarrassing. One is asked why Catholics do that sort of thing. I wish I had an answer that would not add to the embarrassment.

■ In a *Wall Street Journal* column a year ago, after again perusing the fine arts catalogues for the "holiday season," I again complained that, at least in this department, Christmas has not been commercialized nearly enough. In response to the column, well-meaning folk have contacted me to report that they found a nice item here or there—a handsomely carved Peruvian manger scene, a bronze reproduction of a Sicilian Madonna and Child, and so forth. Fair enough. I didn't say that there was nothing of specifically Christian significance on offer. But there is precious little. I suspect that David Brooks has his finger on one reason why that is the case. In his *Bobos in Paradise*, he notes that bobos (bourgeois bohemians) engage in one-downsmanship, one form of which is to co-opt the art of certifiably oppressed cultures. "An educated person can feel a sense of benevolence while appreciating the beauty of their iconography. Sometimes it will be the religious objects of an oppressed culture that will be displayed in an educated home: Amazonian figures, Native American totems, Egyptian deities, animistic shells, or Shinto statuettes. It is acceptable to display sacred items in an educated person's home so long as they are from a religion neither the host nor any of his or her guests is likely to profess." That helps to explain what is offered in these classy "Holiday Season" catalogues from major museums aimed at the bobo market. There is a lot of Judaica, however, which is a partial exception to Brooks' non-profession rule, it being understood that Jews are economically a prime market and psychologically an oppressed people. If there are the oppressed, there must be the oppressor, and the only candidate for the latter role, religiously speaking, is Christianity. An Indian totem, an Aztec doll, or a Chagall print of a stetl bris are all evidence of cultivated sensitivity, whereas a reproduction of a fifteenth-century crucifix, no matter how artistically worthy the craftsmanship, might offend. An exception might be made for one of those charmingly primitive Mexican crucifixes with the wood all painted like blood, since it would be understood that the decidedly non-Mexican bobos who display it are within the non-profession rule. What is not permitted is the religious art from the world's richest tradition of art, namely, European Christianity. Mr. Brooks explains that bobos are into things that are "distressed"—distressed wooden tables, distressed fabrics, distressed pots and pans such as one gets at the Restoration Hardware stores. They are also into distressed peoples and their art, if tastefully distressed. Most Christian art fails the distressed test. To disapprove of such art is the bohemian side of the bobo sensibility. So I suppose it is the case that the source of my complaint about those fine arts catalogues is that they are put together by bobos for bobos. Understanding that does not make it less distressing.

■ You remember "supply-side economics." That's the theory that supplying a product creates demand for the product. It is confirmed again and again when people say, as they often do, that they didn't know they had been looking for FT all these years until they stumbled across it. You can do your part to support supply-side stumbling by asking your local public (or college or university or parish) library why they don't carry FT. The same thing has been known to work very effectively with book stores. Thank you.

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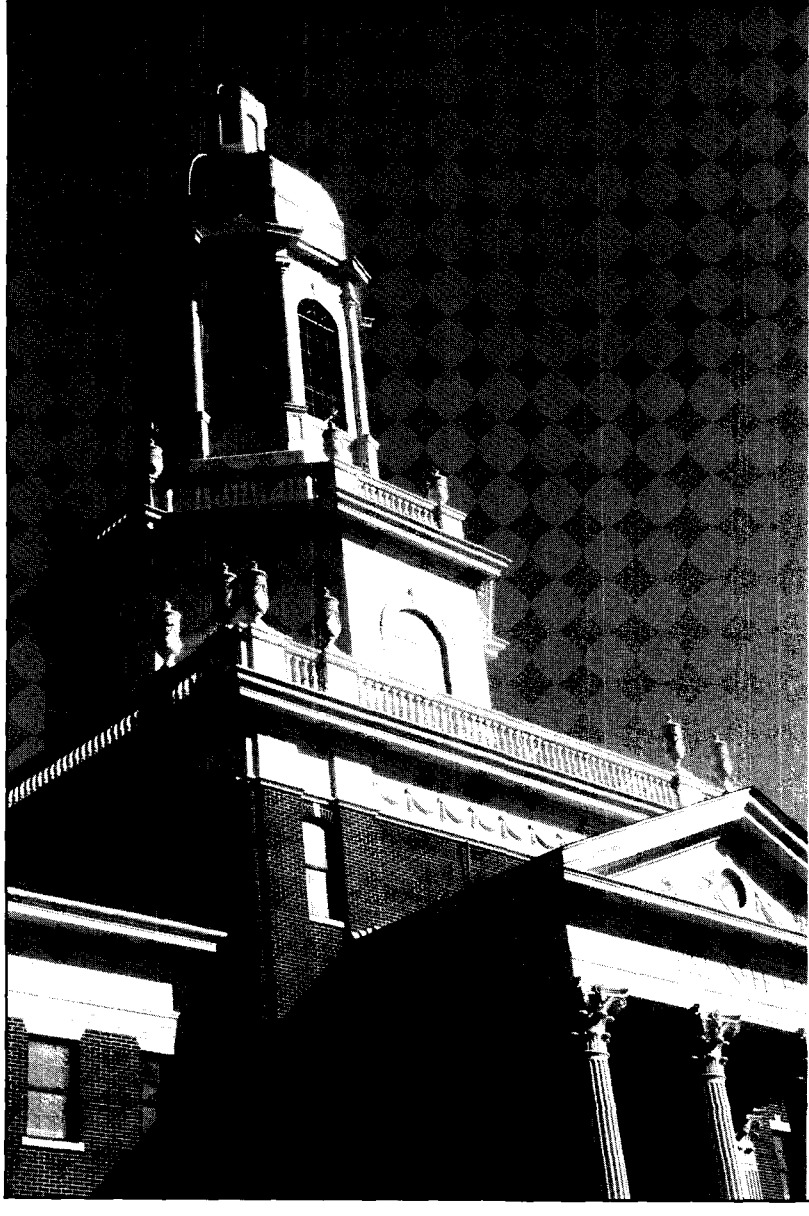

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